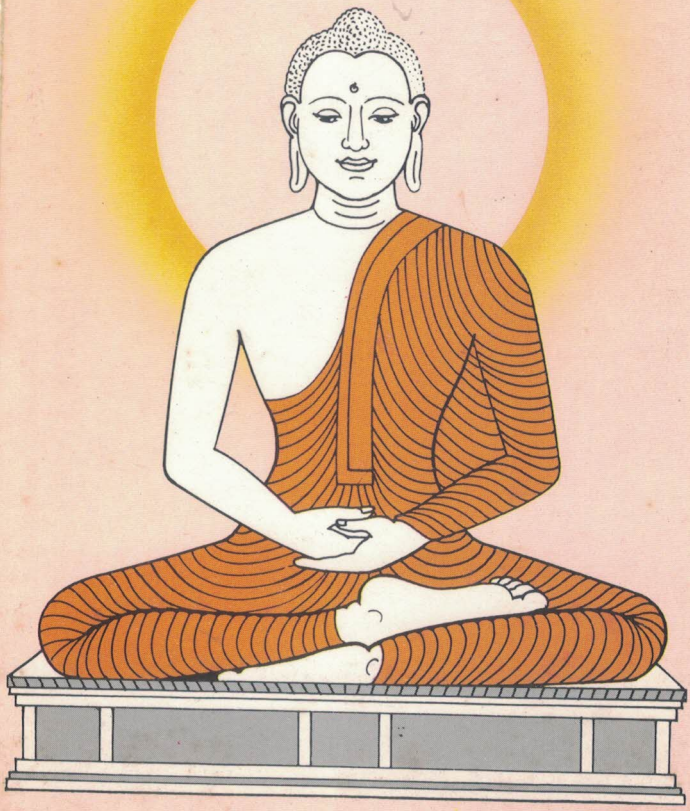
MEDITATION
THE ONLY WAY

K. Sri Dhammananda



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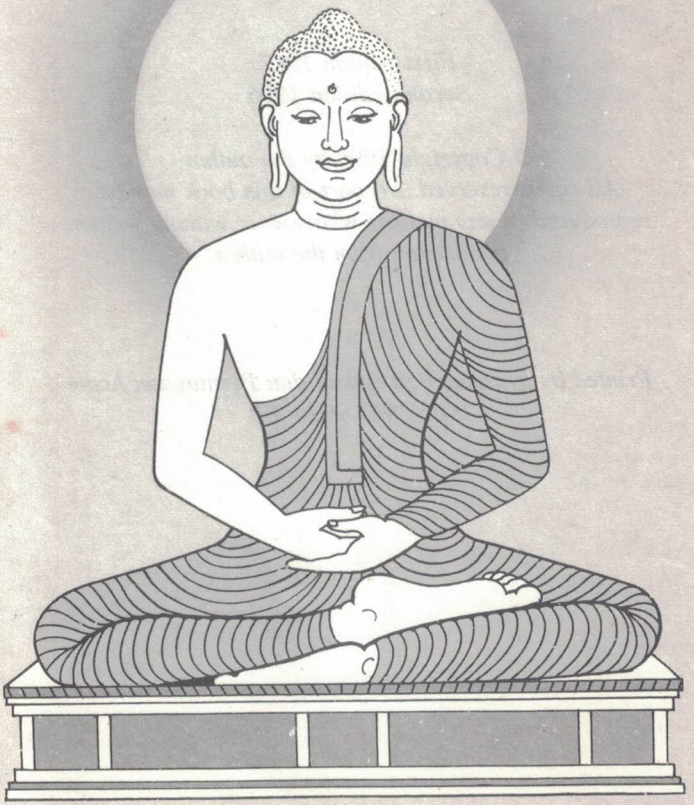

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FOREWORD

Since earliest times men have recognized the vast benefits that can be gained through mind control. While meditation was practised in Europe over the last two thousand years, it was in India and later in China that the techniques of mind control were fully recognized and developed. Over a period of more than four thousand years, religious and spiritual disciplines were centred around meditational practices, but it was the Buddha who gave meditation a central place for gaining Enlightenment, and final salvation. All other religious systems use meditation to direct the mind towards external powers, but the Buddha taught us to use meditation to look within ourselves, to gain *INSIGHT* and thus develop ourselves without depending on external powers.

The primary purpose of meditation is to help the individual to control the mind and train it to bring inner peace to the individual who practises it. In this way a great deal of mental energy can be concentrated and thus make the mind capable of harnessing great power. Examples of the kind of power that mind control can give are the ' miracles ' performed by saints and religious leaders, e.g. walking on water, being in two places at the same time, going through solid walls, light

emanating from the body etc. However, the Buddha taught that such mental power was not the final goal of his teaching. Mind control through meditation brings calmness but the Buddha has taught that such control is merely superficial. The suppression of the mental defilements is temporary. They can come to the surface of the mind at any time and hinder the spiritual development. These defilements like anger, hatred, greed, pride, illusion, wrong views must be completely rooted out from the mind through the development of *Metta* (goodwill), *Karuna* (compassion), *Mudita* (sympathetic joy), *Uppekkha* (equanimity) before one *begins* to tread the path towards emancipation.

Buddhism enumerated five ways in which defilements are removed. They may be summarised as follows:—

1. Overcoming by Repression *(vikkhambhana-pahana).* Pushing back of the five mental hindrances through mental concentration, just as a pot thrown into moss-covered water pushes the moss aside.

2. Overcoming by the Opposite *(tadanga-pahana).* Overcoming the thing that needs to be overcome by knowledge arising from Insight, just as a lighted lamp dispels darkness. For example, the idea of Eternity is dispelled by contemplation on Impermanence.

3. Overcoming by Destruction *(samucchedapahana)*. Destroying the fetters that bind us to continued existence through the knowledge of the noble path, just as a tree is destroyed by lightning.

4. Overcoming by Tranquillization *(patippassaddhi-pahana)*. Stilling and rendering fetters permanently extinct from the moment of fruition *(phala)* after entering into the paths *(magga)*.

5. Overcoming by Escape *(nissarana-pahana)*. This is identical with the extinction and nibbana.

This book aims at explaining why meditation is absolutely essential (it is The Only Way) to give modern man the peace and solace he so desperately needs. It details the long term and short term benefits that can be gained, how to prepare for it, the method to be used and how to evaluate success. Finally there is a section devoted to Vīpassana Meditation by U Nu, the former Prime Minister of Burma and an appendix entitled 'A Modern Approach to Meditation' by Professor Lily De Silva.

This book is written in simple language for the benefit of those who are interested in beginning this important practice, to remove their doubts and fears regarding its spiritual and therapeutic values. It must be emphasized that the title ' Meditation — The Only

Way ' is not meant to imply that Buddhist claim that they alone have the key to salvation. It merely suggests that all human beings can find the ultimate happiness they seek if they begin by training and purifying the mind. Hopefully, ' Meditation — The Only Way ' will contribute towards bringing greater peace and serenity to the minds of those who read this book.

Our sincere thanks are due to Messrs. Lim Teong Chuan and Vijaya Samarawickrama for their help in editorial work; Mrs. Chong Hong Choo, Mr. Charles Moreira and Mr. Klaas de Jong of Queensland, Australia for services rendered in various ways in the production of this book; Ven. Dr. Rastrapal, General Secretary of the International Meditation Centre, Buddha Gaya, India for granting us permission to reproduce an extract from the booklet 'Manual for Vipassana Meditators' by U. Nu and Prof. Lily de Silva of Sri Lanka for her contribution.

K. Sri Dhammananda
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CHAPTER ONE

MEDITATION OR MENTAL CULTURE

Introduction
Insecurity Of Mankind
Look Within Yourself
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Value Of Meditation
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Misinterpretations Of Meditation
Misuse Of Meditation
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MEDITATION OR MENTAL CULTURE

Introduction

We are living in a world community where people think they can find happiness, inner peace and harmony through wealth, power and social status. They also seek happiness through family relationships, jobs, partners, friends and sensual pleasure. They try to change the external conditions of their physical, social and political environment in various ways, because they believe that when these conditions are developed, they can become happy and peaceful. But they forget that at no time will conditions stop changing. Even before the fulfilment of their dreams, things will change and the promise of happiness fades away like the morning mist at daybreak. The harder they try to reach out for happiness, the more elusive it becomes, like catching a fluttering butterfly which is so enticingly near.

People waste a lot of their mental energy when they do not know how to harness it. Energy is like a waterfall. Almost everyday, water pours from the waterfall.

An innovative engineer, after studying this phenomenon, builds a dam to harness this power. The water so accumulated, is converted into hydro-electric power which lights up streets and houses and keeps the factories running. In the same way, we can accumulate our mental energy, harness it, and use it well to serve others, besides enabling ourselves to experience peace and happiness. The Buddha developed his mental energy to a supreme level which as a result enabled him to finally gain enlightenment.

According to Albert Einstein, even atomic energy which has shaken the whole world cannot train a man's mind. Such is the nature of the mind. Without religious guidance, it is difficult to train the mind.

Man has turned the whole world into a time bomb because of his ego, hatred, selfishness and cunningness. The life of every living being is in danger, by the various inventions clever people have made but which are misused by those in power. Atomic energy, for example, has been discovered by a human mind, and can be utilised for constructive or destructive purposes. But today politicians seem to be using this energy as a threat to their neighbours and the whole world. Unless they control their mental energy and channel it for productive ends, great destruction can result.

Insecurity Of Mankind

Today no one can live peacefully without being filled with fear, suspicion and tension. Every being that exists creates some problem for others. They suffer as

a result of actions performed out of ignorance. Why do some people create such problems which violate the peace and happiness of others? It is due to selfishness rooted in an untrained mind. Whatever method we adopt to increase our knowledge in the scientific, technological, or academic fields is by itself inadequate. No proper development of the mind can occur nor can there be real understanding in a mind enslaved by materialistic desires. Due to increasing materialism, man becomes more and more violent, jealous, and engrossed with hatred.

Modern man seems to apply his selfishness and greed to anything he handles. One man cannot trust another although they live together. Even in a densely populated world, men somehow are plagued by insecurity and loneliness because of their lack of confidence and trust in their fellow human beings.

It is very difficult to judge what is in a person's mind. He pretends to be cultured, civilised, educated or religious. Nobody knows him as the crook which he really is. He swindles, cheats, or misleads others for his own benefit. When you reflect on man's crookedness, you can see that animals, in many ways are even better than human beings. Animals are not that cunning and never mislead others. The two legged animals who live in concrete jungles are unreliable and selfish, and often endanger society by introducing all sorts of immoral practices.

Considering the sophisticated technology at man's disposal, we know that if there is any being who can

destroy the world, it will be man himself. In the past, people had some mythological belief that one day a god or a devil would destroy this world. Now we can see for ourselves who is going to destroy this world. Too much political power is given to a few decision makers (and manipulators). As a result the fate of millions of human beings is literally in their hands. If one of those men presses a button, the whole world could be reduced to rubble and ashes in minutes. And if he is mentally deranged (like Hitler), the chance of global destruction is even higher. Over the centuries, certain methods have been discovered by wise people which enable human beings to lead a respectable life. The culture of any community is based on these basic moral principles set out by the wise men. But, unfortunately, all these noble methods in culture and religion are misused.

Look Within Yourself

Most people adopt the wrong methods to find peace and happiness. They seek them from outside of themselves, instead of looking within themselves. People foolishly try to overcome their miseries by seeking to please their senses: they drink, gamble and dance under the illusion that they are enjoying happiness. Sense stimulation does not really bring peace and relaxation. The more we try to please the senses through sensual pleasures, the more will we become slaves to the senses. There will be no end to our craving for satisfaction in this way.

We need to develop ' Insight ' — into the real nature of things. Without insight, we will be like a

person who enjoys the taste of honey oblivious to the dangers from the bees. Many people, however, are beginning to realise the real source of their happiness and the cause of their troubles. We cannot change the chaotic situation in this world unless we create a peaceful and harmonious environment for others to live peacefully. To do that, we have first to tame the mind which is clouded with evil. It should be filled with purity or wisdom which is gained through the cultivation of religious and spiritual principles.

Writing on Insight, Bhikshu Sangharakshita says:

> By Insight we mean the clear vision, the clear perception, of the true nature of things — of what in traditional Buddhist terminology is called things 'as they really are'. In other words, to use more abstract, more philosophical phraseology, it is a direct perception of Reality itself. This is what meditation at its height is — this is what Insight, or sight, really is. Such perception is twofold. It is insight into the conditioned, which is to say, the 'world', or whatever is mundane, transitory and so on; and it is insight into the Unconditioned, that which transcends the world; the Absolute, the Ultimate.

Man Can Be Free

The purpose of religion is to train the mind, not to blindfold mankind with dogma. By controlling the mind we calm our senses and gain deep relaxation. When we talk of controlling the mind, we do not mean brainwashing. A person must control his own mind

willingly and through personal effort. No one should attempt to control the thinking of another. If we are able to control the mind, then we will be able to control everything that affects us. The mind which is fully controlled and purified will be free from mental disturbances and can see many things not perceivable by others with their naked eyes.

This is the only method to achieve mental purity and emancipation. The Buddha gained his enlightenment through this method and by virtue of his own personal experiences. Only then did he introduce the way for others to follow.

Although people and animals can be trained in a physical sense, the training of the mind is more difficult to accomplish. Meditation, which is a system of mind training is, therefore, not an easy task and requires earnestness and effort. Because of its intricacies, many people have misused it and misled others for their personal material gain.

The main purpose of meditation is to help us understand phenomena properly so as to remove the fantasies of our imagination which give us a false view of reality. The mind influenced by greed is like a bowl of coloured water which does not accurately reflect the colour of light. The mind given to anger is like a bowl of boiling water which hinders clear penetration of light. The mind overcome by laziness is like stagnant

water, all is covered with moss and weeds. The mind agitated by excitement and worry is like water disturbed by the wind. The mind that is habitually in doubt is like muddy water placed in darkness. Here we can understand the many difficulties we will have to face if the mind is polluted or deluded.

The Power Of Meditation

J. Krishnamurti, the enigmatic spiritual teacher, gives an elucidative definition of meditation. He says:

> Meditation is not an escape from the world; it is not an isolating self-enclosing activity, but rather the comprehension of the world and its ways. The world has little to offer apart from food, clothes and shelter, and pleasure with its great sorrows. What is important in meditation is the quality of the mind and the heart. It is not what you achieve, or what you say you attain, but rather the quality of a mind that is innocent and vulnerable. Through negation there is the positive state. Merely to gather, or to live in, experience, denies the purity of meditation. Meditation is not a means to an end. It is both the means and the end. The mind can never be made innocent through experience. It is the negation of experience that brings about that positive state of innocence which cannot be cultivated by thought. Thought is never innocent, meditation is the ending of thought, not by the meditator, for the meditator is the meditation. If there is no meditation, then you are like a blind man in a world of great beauty, light and colour.

Meditation is very useful in helping a person to live peacefully despite various disturbances that are so prevalent in this modern world. Not everyone can retire to a forest or to live in ivory towers 'far from the madding crowd.' Through the practice of meditation we can confront and face the pressures of modern living. Meditation practised conscientiously will help a person to face, understand and overcome every problem pertaining to life.

For meditation to proceed and progress, the mind must be completely neutralised from desire and aversion. Of course, at the beginning, one will find this extremely difficult. We cannot control the mind in a single attempt, specially by force, but should apply right effort through practice and understanding.

Value Of Meditation

Buddhists are never forced or compelled to meditate, but meditation can help us appreciate Buddhist teachings, which explain the nature of life in its proper perspective, the nature of the world and worldly conditions, the nature of suffering, and the fleeting nature of pleasures. By understanding the real nature of component things, we realize that all sensations are mind-created. We also realise that to gain happiness we must calm and control the mind. For meditation practice to produce good results we must properly attune the mind with confidence. We should recognise the value of meditation which contributes towards mental training and peace. Meditation strengthens the mind and helps it to understand things properly.

As body needs washing, feeding and medicating, we must understand that mind also needs the same things. Wash the mind through calm meditation. Feed the mind with Dhamma. Medicate the mind, rid the sickness of anger, greed and ignorance with the supreme medicine of the Dhamma. The body needs clothing to cover nakedness; in the same manner, mind also needs discipline to prevent mental nakedness.

Medical science and therapy are not so effective in helping a person to eradicate mental disturbances such as frustration and worries because they arise not as a result of organic disorders, but are mind created. The remedy for these problems is meditation.

The Most Dynamic Force

The most dynamic force in the world is the mind. A single thought appearing in this invisible mind can either save or destroy the world. This mind is a gold mine but people pollute it. Therefore, it is important that the mind must be properly guided by discipline and reason to avoid mental pollution. The Buddha has said, *'No enemy can harm one so much as one's thought of cravings, thoughts of hatred, thoughts of jealousy.'* When we master our mind, we can overcome such negative thoughts, which can make life a nuisance to ourselves as well as to others.

These internal enemies harm us more than external enemies. We suffer more due to worries, enmity and irritability arising from our mind. Therefore, we have to strive to overcome them by harnessing the mental forces of concentration and understanding.

To practise meditation, one must have strong determination, effort and patience. Immediate results should not be expected. We must remember that it takes many years for a person to be qualified as a doctor, lawyer, mathematician, historian or a scientist. Similarly to be a good meditator, a person will take some time to control the elusive mind and calm the senses. Practising meditation is like swimming against the current in a river. One must not lose patience if one is not able to obtain rapid results during the initial stages.

If there is need to apply force and compulsion to meditate, then we are going against our true nature. Instead of relaxing and letting go, we hold on to our ego and develop more pride. In this way, meditation becomes a game of ambition for personal achievement and self aggrandizement. Meditation is like kindness: it is a spontaneous experience, not something that can be forced or acquired through strenuous effort.

Misinterpretations Of Meditation

In his booklet *'What Meditation Really Is'* Bhikshu Sangharakshita says many people have misinterpreted the word meditation:

> So many times I have heard people say 'Meditation means making the mind a blank — making the mind empty.' Others seem to think that meditation simply means sitting and doing nothing. Sitting and doing nothing may be a fine thing to do or not to do, but it is not meditation. Again, sometimes you hear people say, or you even read, that meditation means

sitting and gazing at your navel, possibly squinting as you do so, or that it means 'going into some kind of trance':... [Some others use] this word 'trance' as a synonym for meditation. Other people think that meditation means just sitting quietly and thinking about things, 'turning things over in one's mind.' Others again think that meditation means getting yourself into a sort of self-induced hypnotic state. These are just a few of the more popular and more wide-spread misunderstandings about meditation.

Quite often meditation is identified with a particular kind of meditation, or with a particular concentration technique. It is not, perhaps, generally understood that there are many kinds of meditation, — many methods, — and many concentration techniques. Sometimes people who just know about one of these, or who practise just one, tend to identify the whole practice of meditation exclusively with that particular method, that particular technique. They may claim that their method is the best one, or even that it is the only one, and that you are not actually meditating at all unless you meditate in that particular way, using that particular technique. The other techniques, the other practices, the other traditions, are, they claim of no value. This is the sort of claim that is made.

Misuse Of Meditation

When people develop a certain aspect of their minds through meditation but do not yet possess spiritual

maturity they may experience various forms of excitement which can be extreme in some instances. These sensations can cause fear and may even result in mental imbalance. But a person who is spiritually advanced and has gained certain powers over the material world through meditation remains calm. Also, we must be completely altruistic in meditation. While great power can be harnessed we must always have a right view in doing meditation. And that right view is to gain freedom from unsatisfactoriness, not power over the material world.

There is an amusing story of a man who boasted to the Buddha that as a result of great effort over many years he had mastered the art of walking on water. The Buddha remarked that it was not necessary to waste all that time and effort if one's intention was merely to cross a river — for a boatman could easily have ferried him across for a small payment.

One must cultivate right view and aspiration to cross the sea of *samsara* (cycle of birth and death) to attain emancipation. The aim of Buddhist meditation is to calm and purify the mind so that one may gain release and freedom from *Samsara.*

Unscrupulous men may develop their mental powers through meditation and use these acquired powers for diabolical purposes. But in Buddhist meditation, one must develop *vipassana* — (Insight) to realise the real nature of existence and discard selfish

or egoistic desires. Insight meditation is the only solution to purify man's mind, to rid him of his evil ways or selfish desires.

There are some people who practise meditation, not for spiritual progress, but for material gain. They want to get better jobs. They want to earn more money. They want their business to be more successful. Perhaps they fail to understand that the aim of Buddhist meditation is not to increase but to decrease desires. Materialistic motives are hardly suitable for one wishing to practise meditation, the goal of which lies beyond worldly affairs. One should meditate to experience some spiritual benefits that even money cannot buy or bring.

Before one begins to meditate, one must have confidence and strong determination. All over the world people talk about air pollution, water pollution and so on but they do not concern themselves enough about mental pollution. Man's mind pollutes the whole world and atmosphere with anger, jealousy, grudges, hatred and various other evil forces. These negative mental energies can influence the normal cosmic energies and disturb the universe. When our minds are disturbed by fear, anger and excitement, we not only poison ourselves psychologically but also experience many physical disorders.

Just as an engine which runs for a prolonged period requires cooling down to avoid overheating, even so the mind subjected to various types of mental pollutions needs to be 're-cooled' regularly through meditation.

Impediments To Progress

Some people face difficulties when they attempt to meditate for the first time. They may even experience some uneasiness when they meditate on certain objects. The reason may be that they have chosen the wrong object for their meditation. The wrong object may also create some physical or mental problems, although this in itself is not dangerous.

However, meditation can be a problem to emotionally unstable people who find it difficult to maintain a proper balance in their mind. Beginners may feel frustrated because of their desire to experience good results immediately. If you understand the nature of the mind, you will realise that it is not easy to gain immediate results. We have heard of over enthusiastic young men and women literally going out of their minds because they are over ambitious, adopt the wrong attitude towards meditation and also because they are not properly guided.

Stubbornness, illusion, hallucination and delusion invariably pollute the mind. To remove such mental impurities and hindrances, one has to strive diligently and make use of one's confidence and determination. Good results will eventually follow. One must have lots of patience in order to progress in meditation.

In Buddhism, as in other eastern cultures, patience is an important virtue. The mind must be brought under control gradually. One should not aspire for the higher states without proper and systematic training.

Meditation is a gentle way of weakening the defilements which pollute the mind. If people want 'success' or 'achievement' to boast to others that they have attained this or that level of meditation, they are abusing this method of mental culture.

One must be established in morality and clearly understand that to be fruitful in the discipline of meditation, worldly achievements must not be equated with spiritual development. Ideally, it is beneficial to learn under an experienced teacher or instructor to progress along the right path. But above all, one must never be in a hurry to achieve too much too quickly.

The Buddhist Way

The Buddhist way to meditation is through *Sila, Samadhi* and *Panna.* That means — morality, concentration and wisdom. First, we have to develop our moral background by voluntarily observing certain moral principles and virtues. That is the foundation for a good religious way of life. If we violate the universal law of cause and effect *(karma),* we will have to experience the bad effects sooner or later. That is why the Buddha introduced a moral code in the form of precepts so that we can live in harmony with existing living beings and maintain a healthy, peaceful atmosphere which will promote the well being of all.

If each and every person in this world were to radiate loving-kindness, compassion and understanding towards others, there would be less fear, tension or suspicion. Everybody can live peacefully.

After that, we have to concentrate more on mental development to achieve calmness and peace. That is *samadhi,* deep concentration. When the mind is calmed we gain *panna,* or realisation. Through meditation, we can gain calmness of the mind, understanding or wisdom. This is our main object. The confidence and understanding that we gain through meditation are very important as these achievements help us to avoid undue worries and frustration. We sometimes imagine that our problems are due to the influence of evil spirits, ghosts, charms or black magic or tend to suspect and blame others for these problems. We should try to understand the true nature of life. We meditate not only for our spiritual development but also to maintain our poise and equilibrium in our day-to-day life. If we can maintain patience and tolerance, we will not be easily provoked by others, for we can understand and see things in their correct perspective.

When we develop our mind to the fullest by cultivating virtues and positive qualities, maintaining our human dignity, and observing morality and discipline, we experience real freedom. This makes us appreciative of those who have achieved that end. We pay homage to them. Happy are those who have developed detachment, maintain peace and contentment in their lives.

The highest service man can perform to society is to abstain from evil. A developed and cultured mind can contribute to the weal and happiness of mankind. Meditation is simply not a waste of time. It expands

the mind of a meditator in love and wisdom, and enables him to solve many human problems and enlighten others as well.

Through meditation, we will be able to make the right decision when we are in doubt as to which way to turn. These qualities cannot be bought anywhere. No amount of money or property can buy the qualities attained through meditation.

The Only Path

It is beneficial to recollect that the Buddha in the *Satipatthana Sutta* clearly points out that meditation is

Ekayano Maggo	— the one and only way,
Sattanam visuddhiya	— for the purification of beings,
Soka Pariddavanam samatikkamaya	— for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation,
dukkha domanassanam atthangamaya	— for destruction of suffering and grief,
nayassa adhigamaya	— for entry into the Noble Path,
Nibbanassa sacchikiriyaya	— for the realization of Nibbana.

The Buddha tells us in no uncertain terms that mindfulness has the effect of purifying beings,

overcoming sorrow, causing entry into the Noble Eightfold Path and ultimately of realizing Nibbana itself — *magga* and *phala* (the way and the fruit)

Bhikshu Sangharakshita gives a general perspective on what constitutes the spiritual path.

> We can now begin to see in what the spiritual life, — in what the Higher Evolution — essentially consists. We may say that it consists in a continual progression from lower to higher, and ever higher, states of being and consciousness: from the world of sensuous experience to the world of mental and spiritual form, from the world of mental and spiritual form to the formless world, and from the formless world to Nirvana, or Enlightenment.

CHAPTER TWO

BENEFITS OF MEDITATION

Reap The Benefits
Be Diligent In Your Meditation
The Path To Deliverance

2

BENEFITS OF MEDITATION

Reap The Benefits

Today many people from all over the world, irrespective of their religions, have become aware of the benefits to be gained through meditation. The immediate purpose of meditation is to train the mind and to use it effectively and efficiently in our daily life. The ultimate aim of meditation is to seek release from the wheel of *Samsara* — the cycle of birth and death. Even though it is a most difficult task, positive benefits are obtainable here and now, if one is serious about meditation. It is appropriate to re-iterate what was mentioned earlier: One should not be enslaved by the prospects of these benefits and lose sight of the real aim of Buddhist meditation. The benefits of meditation can be summarised as follows:—

- ☐ If you are a busy person, meditation can help you to get rid of tension and to find relaxation.
- ☐ If you are a worried person, meditation can calm you and help you find peace of mind.

- ☐ If you are a person who has endless problems, meditation can help you to develop courage and strength to face and overcome them.
- ☐ If you lack self-confidence, meditation can help you to gain the self-confidence which is the secret of success in life.
- ☐ If you have fear in your heart, meditation can help you to understand the real nature of the problems that are making you afraid — then you can overcome the fear in your mind.
- ☐ If you are always dissatisfied with everything and nothing in life seems to be satisfactory — meditation can give you the chance to develop and to maintain inner contentment.
- ☐ If you are sceptical and uninterested in the religious way of life, meditation can help you to go beyond your own scepticism and to see some practical values in religious guidance.
- ☐ If you are frustrated and heart-broken due to a lack of understanding of the uncertainty of life and the world, meditation can truly guide and help you to understand the fleeting nature of worldly conditions.
- ☐ If you are a rich man, meditation can help you to realise the nature of your wealth and how to make use of it not only for your own happiness but also for others' happiness.
- ☐ If you are a poor man, meditation can help you to develop contentment and not to harbour jealousy towards those who have more than you.

- ☐ If you are a young man at the cross-roads of your life, and you do not know which way to turn, meditation can help you to the right path to reach your chosen goal.
- ☐ If you are an elderly man who is fed-up with life, meditation can bring you to a deeper understanding of life; this understanding in turn will relieve your pains and increase the joy of living.
- ☐ If you are hot-tempered, you can develop the strength to overcome the weakness of anger, hatred, and resentment to become a more calm and sober person.
- ☐ If you are jealous, you can understand that negative mental attitudes never contribute anything for your benefit.
- ☐ If you cannot reduce your craving for sense-desires, you can learn how to become the master of your sense-desires.
- ☐ If you are addicted to drinking or to drugs, you can overcome the dangerous habit which has enslaved you.
- ☐ If you are a narrow-minded person, you can develop understanding that will be beneficial both to you and your friends and family to avoid misunderstanding.
- ☐ If you are strongly influenced by emotions, your emotions will have no chance to mislead you.

- ☐ If you suffer from certain disorders such as nervous breakdowns and mental disturbances, meditation can activate the positive forces in your mind and body to regain your health, especially if they are psychosomatic problems.

- ☐ If you are a weak-minded person or one who maintains an inferiority complex, meditation can strengthen your mind to develop courage to overcome your weaknesses.

- ☐ If you are a wise person, meditation will lead you to supreme wisdom. Then you will see things as they are, and not as they appear to be.

These are some of the practical benefits that come from practising meditation. These benefits are not for sale in any shop or departmental store. But you can develop them through your meditation. The mind is the key to happiness, and also the key to misery. To understand the mind and to use it well is a task that transcends a peaceful and contented life.

Be Diligent In Your Meditation

Some people say it is very difficult for them to practise meditation because there are a lot of disturbances. No one can stop disturbances. In fact there is no place in this world where there are no disturbances. But if we are wise and can understand things properly, we will know how to guard our minds against any form of disturbances.

The advice of the Buddha is: 'When you see any objects, do not be attached to the objects, but use your mind to develop penetrative insight into the true nature of component things.'

Look at things with awareness in their proper perspective. If the object is tempting, it is better not to be absorbed in that object if you really want to calm the mind. Allow the mind to be free of grasping the sense object. When you hear some sounds, pleasant or unpleasant, just listen with awareness. You must have the mindfulness to stop the sound vibration from affecting your mind. Do not allow your mind to absorb it. You have to train your mind in this way to maintain peace. This is the teaching we can learn from Buddhism. There is no academic discipline which can guide us to train the mind.

When Pythagoras was asked to define who a philosopher was, he said something to this effect: 'When all are invited to the feast of life some go there to enjoy, some go there to win name and fame and there are yet others who go there just to look on. These are the philosophers.' What is meant thereby is that the philosopher does not identify himself with life. He looks at life standing as it were outside life as an objective observer.

The mind can be disturbed by external objects and stimuli. When these external objects and stimuli do not disturb the mind, then the mind creates its own mental objects or imagination. After that it tends to develop

greed, jealousy, hatred, illusion or emotional excitement which pollute the mind, according to the object that it creates. Meditation is the only means by which we can guard our mind. Wise people concentrate on any object whether it is pleasant or unpleasant without creating temptation or aversion towards the object.

We spend a lot of time on our body: wash it, clothe it, feed it, beautify it and relax it, but how much time do we spend on our mind?

Many sicknesses and disorders can be avoided if people could devote some time in the course of a day to calm their senses through the practice of meditation. Many people do not believe this or are too lazy to practise meditation owing to a lack of understanding. Some people say that meditation is only a waste of time.

Meditation can help one to overcome ill-health and maintain good health through developing the mind. When the mind is unburdened, it is free to gain knowledge and understanding. When we harbour evil thoughts in our mind, these pollutions can cause damage to our physical body and we experience the bad effects. Medical science agrees that the mind can be the source for all forms of sickness and the same mind can also be used to cure sickness.

In his view, Krishnamurti says:

> Meditation is the unfolding of the new. The new is beyond and above the repetitious past — and meditation is the ending of this repetition. The death that meditation brings about is the

immortality of the new. The new is not within the area of thought, and meditation is the silence of thought.

The Path To Deliverance

Scientific education, if unaccompanied with proper mental training or religious discipline can create disaster. Actually, we see this is happening all over the world. Educated people who have no wisdom and compassion are known to have abused their intelligence by adopting evil means to achieve their ambitions or desires. Because of the application of dry intellect and technology, we face greater problems and threat today than had been faced by our ancestors in the past. All over the world people are fighting each other. Buddhism teaches us that killing for any reason is unjustifiable. It is worse when people fight and kill in the name of religion.

Meditation can contribute a lot to tame the wicked mind. By knowing that good and evil are both in our mind, we should watch our every thought very carefully and act mindfully. We must try to find out the nature of the thoughts which appear in the mind. Examining the thoughts that appear is in itself an act of meditation.

When the conscious 'I' frets too much, worries too much, or grieves too long and too intensely, then troubles develop in the body. Gastric ulcers, skin diseases, coronary diseases and a host of functional disorders are the products of mental and emotional imbalance. In the case of children, the defective eye-sight are frequently related to emotional disorders.

If you practise meditation, you can learn to behave like a gentleman even though you are disturbed by others. Through meditation you can learn how to relax the body and to calm the mind; you can learn to be tranquil and happy within.

Meditation strengthens the mind and enables it to control human emotion when disturbed by negative thoughts and feelings such as jealousy, anger, pride, and envy.

We must remember that every spiritual master in this world attained the highest point of his life through the practice of meditation. They are honoured today by millions because they have contributed tremendous services to mankind through their supreme knowledge, patience and understanding.

Buddhism deals with the workings of the mind and the intricacies of meditation in the most detailed manner. The path to deliverance is a path of mental development. Buddhist devotees are encouraged to practise meditation as far as their inclinations and facilities permit. To shape one's attitudes and behaviour which are conducive to spiritual progress one should meditate on four subjects: the Buddha; loving kindness; unwholesomeness of life; and death. Even if the time spent on these subjects is not much, these four objects of meditation offer protection, and promote the devotee's progress along the Path to Deliverance.

CHAPTER THREE

PREPARING FOR MEDITATION

Selecting a Place
Selecting a Time
Meditation Teacher
Posture
Taking Food

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PREPARING FOR MEDITATION

Selecting a Place

When you first begin to practise meditation, it is advisable for you to find a quiet place where you can relax without being disturbed. Try to find some place away from the turmoil and bustle of busy life. The place can be a room, garden, your bedroom — any place where it is convenient for you. Once you find a place, stick to it. Don't keep shifting the place of practice.

As your meditation progresses, you can begin to practise the exercises at the place of your daily work. There is no need to go into constant seclusion. Remember that when you have developed your meditation, and you can effectively cut off the external disturbances, anywhere can be a good place to meditate.

Selecting a Time

The mind, like the body, works more effectively in a settled routine, and a mental discipline such as concentration necessitates the adherence to unvarying

habits throughout the practice of meditation. In the field of meditation, moreover, even a strenuous and discerning worker must adopt fixed and regular times for his mental exercises during the early stages of his training; for the aim of this practice is more easily achieved by him who is a regular and continuous worker.

The three best periods for meditation are dawn, noon and sunset, and judged upon the evidence of the personal experiences of the ancients, they are accepted as the most propitious. The hour of dawn is for many reasons better than the other two. This hour is called '*Brahma-muhurta,*' the 'divine moment,' and is the period of intellectual awakening, a fact shown by the Buddha's enlightenment. Furthermore, there is considerable advantage, from the physical point of view, in reserving early hours of the day for intellectual training. This is usually a period of bodily calmness and quiescence and the brain is then fresh after the night's rest, so that it is possible to achieve the mental serenity which enables the mind to advance along the path of concentration.

But if, for one reason or another, you find it impracticable to meditate at dawn, then you should decide upon a suitable time for yourself but whatever time you choose, it should be used only for meditation. During this time, you should put aside all other daily activities in order to give full attention to your meditation object. Don't let anything interfere with your practice, and devote a regular time to the practice

everyday. Don't attempt to meditate for long periods at the beginning. It is more effective to concentrate fully for short spans. The time can be lengthened as you gain more experience. Meditation becomes part of your day-to-day living through constant practice.

Meditation Teacher

Perhaps you feel you need someone to assist, to guide, and to instruct you. It is not always so easy to find a suitably qualified meditation master. If you have any friends who meditate, talk to them; they can be your teachers. If you come across any books or articles on meditation, read them, they can be your teachers. If you are able to find a teacher, remember that a teacher is only a friend and a guide. He cannot do the meditating for you. He cannot do the realizing for you. If you can manage to develop your concentration and mindfulness to be strong, clear and constant, then your concentrated awareness becomes the teacher; your teacher is within you. But you must have confidence and determination to use your effort.

The recognition of our different characters or temperaments is important for meditation. That is the main reason why the Buddha introduced various kinds of objects for different people to practise meditation according to their mentality and understanding capacity. A meditation master will study the real nature of the person who wants to meditate. He will evaluate his mental development, the nature of his mind, ascertain how far he can understand and appreciate the beneficial effects of meditation and assess if there

should be any mental weakness or other hindrances. After ascertaining all these characteristics, the master will then introduce a suitable object for the mind to concentrate. That object should be a neutral one.

Posture

Posture is important to prevent physical problems, such as discomfort, pain, difficulties in blood circulation, headache, backache, or giddiness. Proper posture can help our blood circulation and enable our body to function properly. Those who sit down for many hours may experience numbness and aches. Walking meditation is prescribed by the Buddha to prevent this problem. For this reason, some people prefer walking meditation.

The posture adopted by the Buddha for his meditation is known as the lotus posture. For this posture, you sit on the floor with the right foot on the left thigh and the left foot on the right thigh. The back and neck should be as straight as possible but if the position is found to be uncomfortable, one may move a little to be more comfortable. The essence is not to arouse undue pain and discomfort as these will distract the calming effect of the mind. One should be relaxed. However, such a posture would be difficult for the uninitiated to follow as numbness and aches are bound to occur. The semi-lotus position should be a little easier to adopt. In this posture, the right foot is placed on the left thigh. This posture should be more comfortable than the full lotus position for most. Place the

right palm over the left, with the two thumbs touching lightly at the tips.

Taking Food

Actually there is no restriction as to what we eat but we should not take a heavy meal before a meditation session, especially at night-time. If you take a heavy meal before you meditate you may experience some discomfort. That is why the Buddha advised the monks and those who observe eight precepts, not to have solid food after midday.

Some people are under the impression that Buddhists should not take meat, but eat only vegetarian food. There is no such precept in the Teaching of the Buddha. However, those who desire to have vegetarian food may do so as a personal preference as it is not a religious obligation.

Those who practise meditation either in the jungles or cemeteries, especially at night, are advised to avoid certain types of meat in order to avoid undue reaction from certain animals whose instinct or sense of smell is so strong that they might be attracted to the meditator.

J. Krishnamurthi in his book *'Second Krishnamurti Reader'* says:

> Do what he will, the man of belief and dogma cannot enter into the realm of meditation. To

meditate, freedom is necessary. It is not meditation first and freedom afterwards; freedom — the total denial of social morality and values — is the first movement of meditation. It is not a public affair where many can join in and offer prayers. It stands alone, and is always beyond the borders of social conduct. For truth is not in the things of thought or in what thought has put together and calls truth. The complete negation of this whole structure of thought is the positive aspect of meditation.

Meditation is a never-ending movement ... It comes only when your heart is really open. Not opened by the key of thought, not made safe by the intellect, but when it is as open as the skies without a cloud; then it comes without your knowing, without your invitation. But you can never guard it, keep it, worship it. If you try, it will never come again: do what you will, it will avoid you. In meditation, you are not important, you have no place in it, the beauty of it is not you, but in itself, and to this, you can add nothing. Don't look out of the window hoping to catch it unawares, or sit in a darkened room waiting for it, it comes only when you are not there at all.

CHAPTER FOUR

HOW TO MEDITATE

An Overview
Important Methods
Samatha: Concentration Meditation
Live Now
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The Body As An Object Of Meditation
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Mental States As Objects Of Meditation
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HOW TO MEDITATE

An Overview

Meditation is concentrated awareness or recollectiveness. If you are interested in practising meditation, you must learn how to develop your concentration through *Samatha* or Concentration meditation. *Samatha* refers to the calmness that we experience by controlling and reducing the arising of mental impurities.

On the other hand, after learning how to develop your awareness or mindfulness, you can practise *Vipassana* or insight meditation. *Vipassana* is the insight of clear understanding that we develop through analytical knowledge.

If you are interested in making use of this *samatha* meditation in your daily life, then learn to apply concentration. If you are interested in making use of *Vipassana* meditation then learn to apply awareness to daily activities. In this way you can practise concentrated awareness in the common experiences and events of your daily life.

There is no doubt that *samatha* meditation helps to calm the mind by eradicating many mental defilements and to gain *Jhana*-absorption. But through *Vipassana* meditation we can analyse every component thing and understand its true nature. Through this method we come to know there is nothing for us to cling to or to accept as a permanent entity which remains and that everything which exists in the whole universe is nothing but relative visible or invisible objects.

Important Methods

As a Doctrine of the mind, the Buddha teaches three things:

to *know* the mind— that is near to us, and yet is so unknown;

to *shape* the mind— that is so unwieldly and obstinate, and yet may turn so pliant;

to *free* the mind — that is in bondage all over, and yet may win freedom here and now.

The Buddha advised us to analyse every component thing and understand its nature properly. The understanding of *Dukkha* or unsatisfactoriness, which we experience in everything, paves the way for us to develop this meditation until we finally gain real wisdom. When we realise the real nature of this

universal phenomenon, we do not easily become frustrated or disappointed. With this understanding we will be able to face our problems without fear. The nature of problems is such that no one can change natural occurrences. We simply have to face them. We just have to try to make use of the things that exist by cooperating with the existing Universal law for our living and satisfaction.

Deliberate or formal meditation, as all other aspects of Buddhism, is graded to suit the convenience, the temperament, the objective and the level of spiritual development of the individual. As many as forty subjects of meditation can be used as meditation objects. The list commences with ten external devices *(kasinas)* such as colours, objects, fire, on which one can concentrate his mind. A dead body in different stages of decomposition provides ten themes on impurity for contemplation. Reflections on the *Buddha,* the *Dhamma* and the *Sangha,* ethical virtues, liberality, *devas* (divine beings), peace, death, body and the process of inhaling and exhaling *(anapanasati)* constitute ten more subjects. Meditation on loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity and the four Realms of Formless Existence *(Arupaloka)* along with perception of aversion to greed for food and the analysis of matter into the four elements (water, energy, air, earth) brings the list up to forty.

The subject has to be selected according to the meditator's temperament and for this purpose, people are broadly categorized according to temperament as lustful, irritable, bewildered, devotional, intellectual

and discursive. A subject of meditation, chosen according to one's temperament, enables the development of the mind to the level of one-pointed concentration and perfect tranquility. In this sense, such meditation is a stepping stone to higher mental achievement as trances (*Pali: Jhana; skt: Dhyana*) and the ultimate emancipation through Insight meditation (*Vipassana-bhavana*).

Samatha: Concentration Meditation

Samatha meditation brings the mind to various stages of mental concentration. At very high stages of mental concentration (known as *Jhana*), psychic powers can be developed. However, such high states of concentration are not necessary or practical for most people who have to live the hectic pace of modern life. By calming and strengthening our minds, certain purification processes take place and this mental purification may influence the mind to achieve certain powers over natural phenomena.

Whatever word we use to describe these powers they are worldly and not spiritual. We should not excite ourselves over these so-called ' supernatural ' powers. Some mundane phenomena appear in the mind when it is developed. But gaining these powers of mind over matter is not the main purpose of Buddhist meditation. It must also be emphasized that this method is not a new discovery of the Buddha. Meditation masters in India had gained high levels of development and could do ' miracles ' like walking on water, being in two places at the same time and so on. The followers of

other religions also practise this form of meditation even to this day. The Buddha also practised this method under certain teachers before his Enlightenment. He realised that such meditation cannot lead him to Enlightenment.

Samatha meditation is concerned with producing a one-pointed mind. One pointedness is a concentrated state in which all the faculties and mental power are directed towards one object. A one-pointed mind is a concentrated and unified mind. A one pointed mind is the opposite of a distracted or scattered mind. Ordinarily our mental states are scattered in all directions but if the concentration is fixed on one object, then we begin to know the true nature of that object. The process of concentration gradually modifies the mental states until the whole mental energy converges towards one point.

What is the purpose of developing a one-pointed mind? If you train your mind in this manner, you will gain calmness and tranquility and will be able to gather your attention to one point, so as to stop the mind from frittering away and wasting its useful energy.

The attainment of a calm mind is not an end in itself. Calmness of mind is only a necessary condition to develop Insight. In other words, a calm mind is necessary if you want to have a deep look into yourself and to have a deep understanding of yourself and the world.

For most people, the mind jumps at one moment to the past and at another, to the present or future and it is constantly shifting from the past and to the present to the future and from place to place. Therefore such people waste an enormous amount of mental energy. If you can train your mind to maintain enough concentration, to pay attention to each task from moment to moment, this is more than enough to begin with! When you are reading, walking, talking — whatever you do in your daily life, act with a mind that is calm, paying careful attention to each and every action. This is mindfulness. Learn to focus the mind on each task and develop awareness.

Live Now

If you want to develop concentration, your first task is to find a suitable object on which you can concentrate. As mentioned earlier, in Buddhist meditation, there are 40 objects of meditation that you can use to develop concentration. You need not use all 40 objects, but must select one which is suited to your temperament and mentality. If you have no teacher to select the object of concentration that is suited for you, then you must experiment and make the selection yourself.

Here are some guidelines to find yourself a suitable object for concentration:

- ☐ The object must be neutral; if it evokes any strong feelings of lust, hate, etc., then it cannot calm your mind but will only make it restless and agitated.

- ☐ The object can be either internal or external: An internal object is inside you. Examples of internal objects are breathing, loving kindness, compassion, etc. An external object means an object that is outside of you. Examples: an image of the Buddha, a flower, a mountain, a circle of light, a candle flame etc.

- ☐ The object must be pleasing and acceptable to the mind; if the mind constantly rejects the object, the concentration will be weak.

- ☐ Remember that the object that suits you at one time may not be acceptable at another time. For example, after an outburst of anger, it will be difficult to use loving kindness as an object of your concentration. At such a time, the emotion of anger itself might serve as a better object of concentration.

Once you have selected the object, your task is simply to keep the mind tied to the object just as you might keep an animal tethered to a stake. The key to concentration exercises is to hold the mind to one object at the exclusion of all other objects. By focussing the mind on the object, it will slowly become calm and relaxed.

Here are some concentration exercises that you can develop as formal meditation or as part of your day-to-day activities.

Health exercise: While walking up and down, hold only these three ideas in the mind: ' happy, healthy, strong '. Keep repeating those words over and over; concentrate the mind on these words until you can feel the words physically in the body.

Thinking exercise: While thinking of a subject, hold the mind to that subject. Keep the focus of the mind only on the subject under consideration. Do not entertain any extraneous or irrelevant ideas.

Daily routine exercise: When you read a book keep both your eyes and your mind on the book.

When you sweep the floor, keep the mind on the sweeping.

When you dictate a letter, keep the mind on the dictation and not on the secretary.

Learn to concentrate on what you do from moment to moment. This is living in the present.

Vipassana: Insight Meditation

Vipassana is an insight into the true nature of things; *Vipassana* is seeing things as they are. The path that leads to this insight or realization is awareness or mindfulness. The method to develop mindfulness is based on a famous discourse given by the Buddha.

In *Satipatthana Sutta* the Buddha explains how to develop and cultivate the mind. In this sutta, the

Buddha offers four objects of meditation for consideration: body, feelings, thoughts, and mental states. The basis of the *Satipatthana* practice is to use these four objects for the development of concentration, mindfulness, and insight or understanding of yourself and the world around you. *Satipatthana* offers the most simple, direct, and effective method for training the mind to meet daily tasks and problems and to achieve the highest aim: liberation. *Satipatthana is safe for all types of characters, and is a harmless way to train the mind.* You can use this method anywhere at anytime, in a busy office or in the quiet of a peaceful night.

The task is to develop awareness or mindfulness (*sati*). Awareness is a very simple, very common and very familiar state of the mind. In its elementary stage, awareness is paying bare attention to an object. This means you simply observe an object without judging it or thinking about it. Awareness is simply observing or giving close attention without making any judgement of thinking.

The Body As An Object Of Meditation

The goal of these meditation exercises is to realise the nature of the body and to be non-attached to the body, to be neither attracted to nor repelled by it. Usually most people identify themselves with their bodies. However, at a certain stage of mental purification and insight, you will no longer be identified with the body. You will begin to see the body as a bundle of component things.

Exercise 1: Mindfulness Of Breathing (Anapanasati)

Having chosen your time and place and having adopted the posture most suitable, you are ready to begin. Breathe calmly and naturally, and while breathing, be fully aware of your breath. Be aware of the act of breathing without identifying yourself with this breathing. Acknowledge this process thus: 'Breathing in' 'Breathing out' — if too many ideas or other distractions arise and disturb your concentration, then you might try counting your breath movements: 'Breathing in, 1,2,3,' 'Breathing Out, 1,2,3,-' As the concentration increases, drop the counting and acknowledge the breathing. Try to fix your attention at the point on the nostril where the air makes contact with the body.

Breath may become deep or shallow, slow or quick, following natural tendencies. Keep the body erect and motionless while being mentally alert; be keenly observant and as motionless as possible. As you gain mastery over this exercise, the body becomes relaxed and you will be very peaceful and undisturbed by events either within the mind or from outside.

While doing this exercise, you should forget daily affairs of all kinds and should not even be conscious of yourself. Only be aware of the breathing process. Just mentally note the inflow and outflow of the breath as it occurs. Early morning is a good time for this exercise.

Exercise 2: Mindfulness Of Walking

Walking practice begins with standing on the spot. The standing posture should be an erect body with heels together. Keep the eyes straight forward, neither up nor down. Maintain this posture for the whole of the walking practice. Do not follow the movements with the eyes but with mindfulness.

While standing, be aware of standing; acknowledge you are standing by saying in the mind, 'Standing, standing, standing.' Then move the walking foot. Acknowledge the lifting of the right foot by saying in the mind, 'Lifting.' Push the foot forward and acknowledge mentally, 'going.' Lower the foot, set it on the ground and mentally acknowledge, 'Here.'

The walking exercise consists of three phases: 'Lifting' 'Going' and 'Here'. Acknowledge each phase as you walk mindfully, concentrating on the movements of the walking process until you reach the end of your allotted walking space.

You stop with both feet together in the standing position, saying in the mind, 'Standing, standing, standing.' As you turn around by rotating on your heel, acknowledge each phase of the turning motion: the turning of the heel of one foot and the lifting and setting down on the ground of the other foot. Acknowledge the standing posture. 'Standing, standing, standing.' Then begin to walk, saying again, 'Lifting, Going, Here.' This exercise should be done as slowly and as mindfully as possible.

If any feelings, thoughts, sounds, disturbances etc. arise, you must acknowledge them as they come up. If you hear a sound, say 'Hearing, hearing, hearing'. If some thoughts enter your mind, acknowledge by saying, 'Thinking, thinking, thinking'. After acknowledgement, turn your attention back to the walking exercise. Do not resist the disturbance, because then you will be concentrating on the resistance and forget the object of meditation.

Exercise 3: Mindfulness Of Body In Daily Life

Once you have developed some concentrated awareness with your body as an object of meditation, you must try to clearly understand what you are doing with your body every moment of your working day. While walking, pay attention to the walking movements, observing as many details as you can. Also be aware of yourself when the body sits, stands, reclines. Observe the movements of the body whether in the act of looking at or looking around, whether bending or stretching, whether dressing, washing, eating, chewing, or answering the call of nature. The aim is to hold the attention steady on each event while it is actually present. But do not follow this event with imagined states which are not present. The aim is lost if the body does one thing and the mind thinks of or perceives something else. When both action and thought are united, you will then have 'One pointedness of mind.'

Whenever you have a spare moment during the working day, use your body as an object of concentrated awareness.

Feelings As Objects Of Meditation

The task here is to mentally acknowledge each feeling at the moment it arises. You have a lot of work to do if you want to deal with your feelings. You must understand the various kinds of feelings; whether they are pleasant, unpleasant or neutral. You must understand how they come to be, how they develop after their arising, and how they pass away. Feelings arise whenever there is contact between the senses (eye, ear, nose, tongue and body) and the objects outside. Feelings must be acknowledged and understood for what they are.

Exercise 1: Mindfulness Of The Sense Bases

You must be aware of the sense organs (eye, ear, nose, tongue and body) and the contact they are having with the outside world. You must be aware of the feelings that are arising as a result of this contact. For example: ear is now in contact with sound (e.g., children shouting and laughing) outside your meditation place. 'Unpleasant feeling arising.' Or body now in contact with hard surface (chair you are sitting on). Not unpleasant. Itching sensation arising in the nose; unpleasant feeling; want to scratch. Acknowledge your feelings just as a gate-keeper might keep an eye on the people going in and out. Use feelings as objects for your concentrated awareness. Then you will understand the nature of your feelings and will be able to exercise better control over them.

Exercise 2: Mindfulness Of Feelings In Daily Life

Try to slowly establish some control over your feelings by being moderate in food and by avoiding

too much sleep. Try to see the feelings as they arise in the course of daily life. Here are some examples: while waiting impatiently at the bus stop, observe, 'resentment is arising within.' While enjoying food in a restaurant observe, 'Tongue in contact with good taste objects. Greed arising.' When you meet a good friend you have not seen for a long time, observe, 'Mind in contact with object of friendship. Good, happy feeling arising.'

Mental States As Objects Of Meditation

You cannot run away from your mind. By meditation, you can train the mind to keep calm and be free from disturbances either from within or outside. Apply concentrated awareness to the internal confusion and mental conflicts, and observe or pay attention to all the changing states of your mind. When the mind is properly developed, it brings happiness and bliss. If the mind is neglected, it runs you into endless troubles and difficulties. The disciplined mind is strong and effective, while the wavering mind is weak and ineffective. The wise train their minds as thoroughly as horse-trainers train their horses.

Exercise 1: Watching The Mind

Sit alone and observe the changing conditions of the mind. The task is only a matter of observing the changing states. Do not fight with the mind, or avoid it, or to try to control it. Simply *look* at the mind objectively and try to see it as it is. When the mind is in a state of lust, be aware that this is so. Observe

when the mind is in a state of hatred or when it is free from hatred. Observe the concentrated mind and the scattered mind. Observe all these changing conditions without identifying yourself with them. The task is to turn your attention away from the world and focus it on itself: the mind observing the mind to discover its own nature. This is hardly an easy task, but it can be done.

Exercise 2: Watching The Mind In Daily Life

In all kinds of situations, you must observe the working of your mind without identifying with or finding justification for your thoughts, without erecting the screen of prejudice, without expecting reward or satisfaction. While you are at work, sense desire, hatred, jealousy and other unwholesome states are sure to arise and upset the balance of the mind. That is the time you need meditation to check these harmful elements. For example: Acknowledge, 'mind is worried because I missed the bus. The worry is not in the bus; the worry is in the mind.' Acknowledge, 'Hatred is in the mind because I do not like this food. The hatred is not in the food, it is in the mind. I must carefully observe this hatred in the mind.'

Thoughts As Objects Of Meditation

In the *Satipatthana Sutta* is found the awareness way of Enlightenment as shown by the Buddha. Here, the various aspects of the Dhamma or Teaching — mental objects — are mindfully examined and observed as they arise within. For those who are beginning

meditation and are unaware of these aspects of the teaching of the Buddha, the mental objects can be taken as the thoughts and ideas that arise within the mind.

The task here is to be aware of the thoughts that arise and pass away within the mind. You must understand the nature of thoughts. You must understand how to make use of the good thoughts and prevent harmful thoughts. Your thoughts need constant watching if the mind is to be purified.

Exercise 1: Mindfulness Of Thoughts

Sit alone and concentrate the mind on the thoughts. Watch the good thoughts and observe how they affect your mental state. Watch the harmful thoughts and observe how they disturb your mental state. Simply observe the thoughts dispassionately and so create the opportunity to go beyond them. The moving beyond all thoughts and knowledge brings peace, harmony, and happiness. Just as you might watch people come and go from your room, watch your thoughts passing through your mind. You can slowly reduce the number of thoughts. Every thought reduced adds peace and strength to your mind. If you fight with the thoughts, you can have a very unpleasant task. Simply observe them. Slowly you will come to understand how to control evil thoughts and to encourage good thoughts.

Exercise 2: Mindfulness Of Mental Objects

In the course of your working day, try to observe your thinking process. Do not identify with this process: simply observe it. Acknowledge, 'Now my

thinking is wrong: I am trying to cheat this man.' Acknowledge, 'The mind is thinking so negatively now. Whatever I think of, I think negatively. Why is this?' Acknowledge, 'This is a good idea that just appeared in the mind. I must give it to Mr. X to use.'

Progress In Meditation

Remember that practising meditation requires patience, persistence, and effort. Lasting progress may take much effort and a long time to achieve. There are no short cuts. No magic formulae. The process of meditation requires hard work: it is like swimming against the current.

You might be disappointed if you expect immediate or quick results from your meditation. If you are a busy person with many worldly ambitions, you cannot suddenly and voluntarily quieten your mind to the point of removing all thoughts; you cannot suddenly experience a strong and continuous concentrated awareness.

If you hope to make progress in meditation, you have to set yourself some training rules. Training rules are important to the fitness of an athlete who intends to win a race. Likewise, training rules are important to the fitness of a meditator who intends to make some lasting progress. In establishing your self-discipline, be like the guitar string that is not too tight and not too slack: do not lose your sense of harmony.

Good mental and physical health is necessary for your progress. You must maintain and generate sufficient bodily and mental energy. A weak and overtired body or mind is a big hindrance to meditation. You must rest your body and mind.

How can you judge your true progress in meditation? It is not easy for a person to evaluate his spiritual progress. Do not judge by momentary states of euphoria, altered perceptions, unusual states of consciousness, occult powers.

Here is a rough rule of thumb for you to measure true progress: if you are experiencing increased states of happiness, peace and tranquility, and if you are experiencing decreased states of agitation, depression, worry, anxiety, then you are making true progress.

Meditation In Daily Life

Buddhism teaches us how to maintain mindfulness. When we realise that certain ideas are not dangerous or harmful to us as well as to others, we must try to develop and nurture such thoughts for the welfare of others and for ourselves.

Even when we talk, we must be fully mindful. We have to weigh and judge carefully whether the words we use are hurtful or otherwise. Again, when we are walking, sitting, sleeping, or eating, we should maintain mindfulness. Without mindfulness we may make mistakes and even offend others. We also may harm

ourselves in the process. We must constantly be on guard to maintain a healthy mind, in thought, word or deed.

A devout Buddhist will conscientiously recite some stanzas or recitals when he offers flowers, incense, light, etc. before a Buddha image. At such time, in reality, he is engaged in some form of meditation.

Stanzas or recitals for the various types of offerings have been uttered in traditional Buddhist devotions for thousands of years. These recitals are not prayers through which a supernatural power is asked to respond to a devotee's expressed requests. Instead, these stanzas embody elements for the devotee to meditate on. They range from the virtues of the *Buddha, Dhamma* and the *Sangha* to specific subjects prescribed for contemplation.

For example, as flowers are placed before a Buddha image, a devotee says 'I offer these flowers to the Buddha. By this merit may I attain emancipation. Just as these flowers will fade and wither away so will my body.' Thus one meditates on the impermanence of the body, a basic subject of contemplation in the Buddhist system of mind training.

The state of concentrated awareness can be developed as a formal meditation. Yet, this state must slowly be transferred into your daily life. It may take much time, effort and patience but you can apply meditation in your whole life.

If you want, you can always create opportunities to develop some form of concentrated awareness in your daily life. In modern life there are so many duties to perform, so many hurried actions, tense moments, and anxious situations which create such a great waste of mental energy.

In the midst of life's turmoil, set aside some time each day for quiet meditation to strengthen your mind. This is an asset to your daily work and progress. By examining your thoughts and feelings as they arise within your daily routine, you can slowly probe into the inner meaning of things. You can find strength and peace within.

If you can practise meditation in your daily life, then you are fully alive and living in the present. You are completely aware of what is happening within you and around you. In a restless world, you live with an inner peace and calm.

CHAPTER FIVE

EHI PASSIKO — COME AND SEE

An Open Invitation
Power Of Loving-Kindness And Righteousness
Sublime State Of Mind
Healthy Mind And Body

5

EHI PASSIKO — COME AND SEE

An Open Invitation

Meditation need not be given any religious labels. Anyone can practise it. If the mind is ready, it can be trained and made use of for good purposes.

Mental energy can be harnessed to serve oneself as well as others. This energy is the greatest force in the Universe. All the other energies are blind forces, but mental energy is an intelligent force. This intelligent force can be used to divert all the other existing energies for wholesome and beneficial purposes. Otherwise, people may misuse this energy for destructive purposes.

Meditation is good for everybody irrespective of race, religion or creed. Meditation is the benevolent force to make this world a truly beautiful and peaceful place to live in.

When the mind is tamed through meditation, no problems of either war or human destiny are beyond the power of mankind to change and influence,

especially when we realize that *the source of war lies with ourselves.* This principle is embodied in the preamble to the UNESCO charter on Human Rights which states, *'Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed'.*

Power Of Loving-Kindness And Righteousness

In meditation there must be purity in the mind. There is an interesting *Jataka* story on the real value of radiating loving kindness. (*Jataka* stories are about the past lives of the Buddha-to-be in his search for Enlightenment. These stories reinforce some moral points.)

Once upon a time, the Buddha-to-be was leading an ascetic life and he concentrated on radiating his loving-kindness to all living beings. The king of that country was a very understanding and righteous ruler who ruled the country with compassion. He wanted to find out whether there was anyone who was dissatisfied with his way of ruling the country. But he could not find anyone who had any complaints to make.

Thinking that the people were afraid to complain to him personally, he disguised himself as an ordinary man, and went to find out the feelings of his people.

As he was walking, he saw an ascetic sitting under a tree. He asked the man what he was doing there. The man replied that he had been meditating under that

tree for a long period of time. The meditator then offered a fruit from that tree to the king to eat. Everybody knew that the fruit from that particular tree was very bitter.

When he was asked to eat, the king inquired, 'How can I eat this fruit? It is bitter.' Then the meditator told him, 'Don't worry! Just take one bite.' The king took one bite and found it to be very sweet'.

The meditator then explained to the king, 'I have been radiating my loving-kindness for a long period under this tree. As a result, the atmosphere of this area has changed, even to the extent of making the bitter fruit become sweet and edible. And there is another reason. The king of this country is a very kind, understanding and righteous ruler. His righteousness has also helped to purify the atmosphere. These are the two reasons why the bitter fruit became sweet.'

Sublime State Of Mind

Meditation is that brightness in the mind which prepares the way for action; and without that there is no love.

If every person in this world were to radiate loving-kindness, compassion and understanding towards others, there should not be any fear, tension or suspicion. Everybody can live in peace and in harmony. The world will be a safer place for all humanity.

When you observe some people carefully, you will notice how they behave, how they talk and how they maintain their poise of gentleness and cheerfulness even

when they are confronted by others. You can say that such persons are above the ordinary people. Their appearance should indicate the development of their minds. On the other hand there are those who try to show their cleverness or superiority by maintaining a proud attitude. This indicates immaturity or shallowness of their minds. Every individual has his own intrinsic character or behaviour and we can categorize each as being imbued with an animal nature, devilish nature, human nature or divine nature.

Meditation is a method we can use to tame the animal and devilish nature within us. Some people do not behave as cultured people. They are rough and crude. They are most intolerant. This clearly shows that they have not tamed their animal or devilish nature although they are human beings.

By controlling such weaknesses, a cultured person proves his real humane qualities, by upholding human dignity and intelligence. The divine nature prevails in one who has attained noble or sublime states of mind. It is a perfect life where there are no taints and where no evil is committed. Such people are pleasing to everybody, even to non-human beings. Understanding people always maintain a balanced mind. The Buddha says, *'Contentment is the highest wealth'*. If we can have this attitude, we can maintain our peace and happiness. However, this does not mean that we should not work hard to earn our living. Contentment should not be used as an excuse for laziness and not trying hard enough. Today man has forgotten the value of contentment. That is why there is so much unhealthy competi-

tion among men. We have forgotten and neglected the ancient wisdom. Mahatma Gandhi once said: 'Here in this world we can find everything to satisfy our needs but not our greed.' Again he said: 'Fewer the needs, greater the Happiness'.

In his book *'The Second Krishnamurti Reader'* the author says,

> Meditation is the awakening of bliss; it is both of the senses and transcending them. It has no continuity, for it is not of time. The happiness and the joy of relationship, the sight of a cloud carrying the earth, and the light of spring on the leaves, are the delight of the eye and of the mind. This delight can be cultivated by thought and given a duration in the space of memory, but it is not the bliss of meditation in which is included the intensity of the senses... Thought is like the smoke of a fire and bliss is the fire without the cloud of smoke that brings tears to the eyes. Pleasure is one thing, and bliss another. Pleasure is the bondage of thought, and bliss is beyond and above thought. The foundation of meditation is the understanding of thought and of pleasure, with their morality and the discipline which gives comfort. The bliss of meditation is not of time or duration; it is beyond both and therefore not measurable. Its ecstasy is not in the eye of the beholder, nor it is an experience of the thinker.

Healthy Mind And Body

We have organised our life in a way which we thought can bring us enjoyment, but little do we realise

that we are only deluding ourselves. The modern world creates excitement but not happiness. This excitement disturbs our minds and upsets our nervous systems. Meditation is the only way to calm the mind and the nervous system in order to help us to lead a healthy life through spiritual development.

The Buddha has said, *'Health is the highest gain.'* If we neglect our health, no matter what we gain, we will lead a very miserable life. It is already established that meditation is the remedy for many physical and mental sicknesses. Medical authorities and great psychologists the world over say that mental frustration, worries, miseries, anxieties, tension and fear are the cause of many diseases. And even latent sickness will be aggravated through such mental conditions.

Naturally, the untrained mind is very elusive and persuades people to commit evil and become slaves of the senses. Imagination and emotions always mislead man if his mind is not properly trained. One who knows how to practise meditation will be able to control his mind when it is misled by the senses.

Most of the troubles we are confronting today are due to the untrained and uncultured mind.

The Buddha discovered that meditation is the only way to find peace and realize the ultimate of life. He had, therefore, made the practice of mindfulness central to his Teaching.

Mindfulness, then can be summarised as:

— the unfailing master key for *knowing* the mind, and is thus the starting point;

— the perfect tool for *shaping* the mind, and is thus the focal point;

— the lofty manifestation of the achieved *freedom* of the mind, and is thus the culminating point.

The Buddha made it very clear that this is the only method for us to gain final liberation from an unsatisfactory existence in this life.

To have a healthy body and mind and to have peace in life, one must learn how to practise meditation. The Buddha gained his Enlightenment through the development of his mind. He did not seek divine power to help him. He gained his wisdom through self-effort by practising meditation.

The most difficult task facing the meditator is to tame the mind. It is not impossible for a serious meditator to attain his goal. The Buddha has said: 'Bhikkhus, a man of energetic perseverance will succeed in all his endeavour.'

Buddhist meditation has no other purpose than to be mindful of the present, i.e. the state of fully awakened consciousness, by clearing from it all obstacles that have been created by habit or tradition.

What is important is not the theory, views, opinions or concepts about meditation, but to have the patience to strive on diligently with the practice of meditation as taught in the *Satipatthana Sutta.*

Practise it quietly and observe the results. Come and follow the ancient path by taking up the Buddha's clarion call of *'Ehi Passiko': 'Come and See'* for yourself.

MANUAL FOR VIPASSANA MEDITATORS

By

U NU

(Former Prime Minister of Burma)

MANUAL
FOR
VIPASSANA
MEDITATORS

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By U Nu

The Most Important Requisites For A Meditator

The five most important requisites for a meditator who wants to practise *Vipassana* meditation for the achievement of Supreme bliss are as follows:

a) A qualified teacher,
b) A firm faith,
c) Good discipline,
d) Real honesty,
e) Persistent diligence.

A Qualified Instructor

A qualified instructor is a person who has himself practised *Vipassana* meditation thoroughly and has acquired a very sound experience of meditation.

The meditator should see and relate to the instructor very often about his experience of the meditation. During the interview, the instructor can guide the meditator on the correct method of meditation. If the meditator is discouraged due to lack of progress, the instructor must give him some words of encouragement.

A Firm Faith

Not all meditators have firm faith in meditation. Some do have the characteristics, namely, obedience, faith, discipline, honesty and diligence. But they still have weaknesses in the mind which must be recognised.

With insight, the mental impurities of *loba, dosa, moha,* (greed, ill-feeling, ignorance) can be uprooted. It is not an easy task to achieve these insights. Only meditators with firm faith and the correct view of themselves will have the ability to attain mental purification.

Good Discipline

For best results, it is recommended that one seeks training at a proper meditation centre. From the time the lessons in meditation begin until a meditator leaves the centre, he will have practically no time to attend to external activities.

Those who enter into a meditation centre usually get up very early in the morning and practise meditation for many hours. This insufficiency of sleep, under normal circumstances, may affect the health of a person. But it does not affect the practising meditator, because of his mental concentration.

General conversation on worldly affairs, smoking, reading of newspapers, books, watching television, writing letters, doing anything which is not connected with meditation, are not encouraged at the centre.

Real Honesty

In relating his experiences to the instructor, the meditator must be truthful. He must relate only the facts, good or bad, which the meditator has definitely experienced. If he does not have mental concentration, or if he loses faith in the meditation, he must reveal it. There are some meditators who have learnt about meditation either from others or from books. During the interview with the instructor, they may relate these facts as if they are their own. This kind of untruthful dealings must be avoided at any cost. If the meditator does not tell the truth to the instructor the latter will not be in a position to help him. The meditator must relate only what he has experienced during meditation and not what he imagines he has experienced. He must therefore be able to examine himself mindfully.

Persistent Diligence

As has been pointed out above, the task of uprooting *loba, dosa* and *moha* is not an easy task. It requires unflagging effort, patience, strong determination, devotion and understanding of the real purpose of Buddhist meditation.

Introduction To Vipassana Bhavana

The meditator should understand the true nature of mind and body, if he wants to practise *Vipassana Bhavana* effectively.

Mind is called *Citta,* Body is called *Rupa.* Many people think that they maintain the same mind and body from birth to death. It is not so. *Citta* (mind)

is only a flash. It comes into being and dies as soon as it has given birth to the following *Citta.* This *Citta* in turn also dies, as soon as it has given birth to the next *Citta.* This mental process of births and deaths of *Citta* takes place endlessly. The body also is not the same body from birth to death. The body, in fact, is composed of extraordinary tiny particles, called *paramanu* (atoms). They die as soon as they come into being. These particles, like mind are also in a flux. This impermanent nature of the mind and body is called *anicca.*

Vipassana means perceiving clearly and positively. Therefore *Vipassana Bhavana* means meditation for perceiving the impermanency of one's own mind and body. When the meditator perceives impermanence of his own mind and body clearly and positively, he will naturally have spontaneous realizations that the mind and body are unreal and they cannot cause real happiness. These spontaneous realizations are called the realizations of the unsatisfactoriness of one's own mind and body. When the meditator perceives these two characteristics, he also will have the additional spontaneous realization that mind and body are impervious, uncontrollable, and that they are appearing and disappearing in accordance with the *anatta* (unsubstantiality) of one's own mind and body.

The realization of *dukkha* and *anatta,* as a result of the perception of *anicca,* are essential for the achievement of complete liberation. No one can achieve sainthood unless he has the perception of *anicca* and the realization of *dukkha* and *anatta.*

Four Types Of Mental Concentration

Germs cannot be seen with the naked eye in a glass of water. They can however be clearly seen if one looks through a microscope. In the same way, the meditator will perceive impermanence if he can look at himself through four types of mental concentration. The mental concentration in *Vipassana* meditation is called *Satipatthana* (mindfulness or steadfast awareness).

Four types of mental concentration, through which a meditator can see impermanence, are as follows.

1. Steadfast mindfulness of the *body* will enable the meditator to be aware of everything pertaining to the body. He will be aware of the movements of any part of his body. Even when there is no movement, he will be aware that there is no movement.

2. Steadfast mindfulness of the *feelings* will enable the meditator to be aware of all the mental as well as bodily feelings. The feelings are pleasant, unpleasant and neutral. As soon as he has any of these feelings, his proper mindfulness will enable him to be aware of them.

3. Steadfast awareness of the *mind* will enable the meditator to be aware of its different natures. As soon as he has greed, he will be aware of it. As soon as he has feeling, he will be aware of it. As soon as he has sexual desire,

he will be aware of it. If his mind wanders, he will be aware of it. If his mental concentration is good, he will be aware that it is good. Happiness, unhappiness, elation, dejection, having faith, losing faith, diligence, indolence etc. cannot escape the awareness of the skillful meditator. Awareness of the nature of the mind will enable him to be aware of the disturbances as soon as any one of them appears.

4. Mindfulness of *thoughts* will enable the meditator to be aware of thoughts. Most beginners will think of worldly affairs while they are meditating. Mindfulness will enable the meditator to be aware of the train of thoughts and control them before they go too far.

I. Steps To Achieve Mental Concentration

Meditators are encouraged to observe the Five Precepts or Eight Precepts. The meditator who cannot control his body through *sila* (moral discipline) will never be able to control his mind.

II. Continence (Self-Restraint)

Continence is the essence of life for a meditator. During the period of meditation, eat what you can obtain, sleep where you are allocated. Give up everything that has nothing to do with meditation.

III. Other Preliminaries To Meditation

1. Make the following aspiration:
' May the precepts which I have undertaken be helpful in my meditation. '

2. If the meditator has made derogatory remarks against meditation, he should, after paying homage to the *Buddha, Dhamma* and *Sangha,* ask for forgiveness. If he has made fun of persons who have practised meditation, he should apologise to them. If he has no opportunity of seeing them, he must express his regrets to the instructor for having done so.

3. It will be helpful if the meditator says,
' I seek refuge in the Buddha.'
Some beginners get frightened when they see some hallucinations during meditation. As a result of the fright, they cannot continue their meditation for some time. Many of these cases are nothing but the figments of their imagination. If a meditator has sought refuge in the Buddha, before he begins his meditation, such incidents will not take place. Even if they do take place, the fright can be quickly controlled.

4. The meditator should formally ask the instructor not to hesitate to correct him if he happens to be on the wrong path.

5. After receiving instructions and before he begins meditation, it will be very helpful if he can contemplate on the following for a few moments:
   a) *Nibbana,* (which means the end of suffering) is good.
   b) *Maggas* (Perfect Path which can bring about the end of suffering) is good.
   c) By virtue of *Vipassana,* I shall achieve the path which can bring about the end of suffering.
   d) I am now on the path, which *Buddhas, Pacceka Buddhas,* and *Arahants* have traversed.
6. It will be helpful if he can think of the virtues of the *Buddha, Dhamma* and *Sangha.* It will give the meditator feelings of elation and confidence.
7. It will be helpful if he can concentrate on a corpse, which he had seen, and say to himself, ' I will also die like this one day'. It will be very helpful to shut out the five mental hindrances, namely, sensuality, ill-will, torpor of mind or body, worry and wavering.
8. The meditator should not forget the *Brahmas* and *devas.* He should remember and radiate *metta* (loving-kindness) to all living beings by reciting:
   ' May all living beings who are near and far away, have peace of mind'.

9. When he meditates, he can sit in any posture. He may sit on a chair or sit on the floor according to his convenience.

Vipassana Bhavana

The following is a summary of the detailed instructions given to the meditators by Mahasi Sayadaw of Burma.

Concentrate on the abdomen. You will see it rising and falling. If rising and falling are not noticeable, put the palm of your hand on the abdomen for a few minutes. When you can notice rising and falling, you can take away the palm.

Then, when the abdomen rises because of inhaling, you must say mentally ' Rising '. When the abdomen falls because of exhaling, you must say mentally ' Falling '. While it is rising and falling, you must be fully aware of rising and falling. You must inhale and exhale normally. You must not exert yourself in any way. If you do so, you will soon be tired out.

When you say something appropriate to describe what you are aware of, say it mentally.

Be Mindful

While concentrating on rising and falling, your mind may wander. As soon as you become aware of your thoughts, call them by their appropriate names. For example, if you are planning something, say mentally, 'planning, planning, planning '. If you are

solving a problem, say, 'solving, solving, solving' . If your mind is wandering, say, 'wandering, wandering, wandering' . If you are meeting somebody during the mental wandering, say, 'meeting, meeting, meeting '. If during the mental wandering you are talking to somebody, say, 'talking, talking, talking' . You must call the thoughts by their appropriate names repeatedly, until they disappear. When these thoughts disappear, concentrate on rising and falling. While concentrating on this, if you want to swallow your saliva, say, 'wanting to swallow' . If you swallow it, say 'swallowing' . If you want to spit, say, 'wanting to spit' . If you spit, say 'spitting' . After that, concentrate on rising and falling. While concentrating on it, if you want to bend your head, say, 'wanting to bend' . When you are bending, say, 'bending, bending' . When you bend, bend slowly. If you want to raise your head, say, 'raising, raising, raising'. Raise the head slowly. After that, concentrate on rising and falling.

If a part of your body is aching because of too much sitting, concentrate on that spot and say, 'aching, aching, aching' . The ache may disappear after some time. If, however, you want to change your position, because it grows worse, say, 'wanting to change' . Call all the movements of your body by their appropriate names. For example, you want to raise your leg, say, ' wanting to raise '. While you are raising it, raise slowly, while saying 'raising, raising, raising' , at every movement. If you want to stretch your leg, say, ' wanting to stretch '. And as you stretch slowly, say,

' stretching, stretching, stretching ' at every movement. If you want to bend your leg, say, 'wanting to bend' . And as you bend slowly, say, 'bending, bending, bending' , at every moment. When you want to put it down, say, 'wanting to put it down' . As you put it down slowly, say, ' putting down, putting down ' at every movement. As you put down the leg, if a part of it touches something, say, 'touching' . After that, concentrate on rising and falling. While you are thus concentrating, you may feel hot in a part of your body. Do as you have done in the case of aching. *Make constant effort to be aware.* Awareness must not cease even for a moment.

Some people may have very strange experiences. Whenever their *Samadhi* (Calmness) gains momentum, they have unbearable pains, such as pain just above the abdomen; pain in the flesh as if they have been pierced with a sharp knife; a burning sensation throughout their whole body; itching as if little insects are running to and fro on the body; intense cold throughout the body. However, these unbearable pains and sensations stop as soon as the meditator increases his effort to maintain awareness. And these pains come back again, as soon as calmness regains momentum.

Develop Concentration

If you have similar experiences, firstly concentrate on these pains. If they do not disappear in spite of the concentration, do not pay attention to them. Just concentrate vigorously on rising and falling. Do not worry. Do not be afraid. These are just ordinary pains. Due to lack of concentration, one is not aware of them.

(Some other matters in which one is interested distract one and keep these pains submerged) When these interests are driven away by concentration, the pains become conspicuous. Therefore, if you come across such experiences, do not stop your practice out of fright. Carry on. The pains cannot endanger you. They will certainly disappear if you persist in your meditation.

While concentrating on rising and falling, some people find themselves to be swinging inadvertently. If you have a similar experience, just say, 'swinging, swinging,' while you are concentrating on it. In spite of this concentration, if swinging becomes wilder, either lean against a wall or lie on your bed, while concentrating on it. The swinging will disappear.

Sometimes, while you are concentrating, you may have a very queer sensation from head to toe, and you get very easily frightened even by a little harmless noise. This sort of thing usually happens when your concentration is advanced.

If, while you are concentrating, you want to drink water, say, 'wanting to drink water' . If you want to get up from your seat, say, 'wanting to get up' . When you get up, you must have awareness of every movement of your limbs. Concentrating on the body that slowly rises up, you must say, ' rising, rising, rising ' at every moment. If you have stood up, say, 'standing up' . If you look at the jug, say, 'looking' or ' seeing '. If you want to go to the jug, say, 'wanting

to go' . While you are going, say, 'going, going,' at every step. Or you may say 'left/right' . You must be fully aware of every stage from raising to lowering. If you are walking slowly, say, 'Raising' when you raise your feet and say, 'lowering' when you lower your feet.

Develop Mindfulness Gradually

When you can master the two stages of ' raising ' and 'lowering,' pick up one more stage like this: Say ' Raising ' as soon as you raise your feet. Say ' Stepping ' as soon as you step. And say ' Lowering ' as soon as you lower. Remember three stages — raising, stepping, and lowering. You must be fully aware of these three stages. Whenever you see the jug or something else, say, 'seeing' or 'looking' . If you stand near the jug, say, 'standing' . When you want to stretch your hands towards the glass, say, 'wanting to stretch' . When you stretch your hands slowly towards the glass, say, 'Stretching, stretching, stretching' . As soon as your hands touch the glass, say, 'touching' . When you want to pour water into the glass, say, 'wanting to pour' . When you pour water slowly into the glass, say, 'pouring, pouring' .

When you want to bring the glass to your mouth, say, 'wanting to bring'. As you slowly bring the glass towards your mouth, say, 'bringing, bringing, bringing' . As soon as the glass touches your mouth, say, 'touching' . When your lips feel cold, say, ' feeling cold, feeling cold '. While you are drinking slowly, say, 'drinking, drinking, drinking' . As water

is going down the mouth and the throat, your mouth and throat feel cold. You must be fully aware of it and say all the time, 'feeling cold, feeling cold' . When you are slowly putting the glass or the jug back, say, ' putting back, putting back '. When you want to drop your hands, say, 'wanting to drop' . When you slowly put your hand down, say, 'dropping, dropping, dropping' . If your hand touches your body say, ' touching, touching '. If you want to turn back, say, ' wanting to turn '. When you turn slowly, say, ' turning, turning, turning '. When you walk back to your place, concentrate on the steps, just as you did when you came towards the jug. When you want to stand, say, 'wanting to stand' . While you are standing say, 'Standing, standing, standing' . After standing there for a while, concentrate on rising and falling.

When you want to sit, say, 'wanting to sit' . When you are walking to the place where you are going to sit, concentrate on your steps, saying the appropriate words, as before. When you reach that place, say ' reaching '. When you turn slowly, say, 'turning, turning' . When you want to sit, say, 'wanting to sit' . When you sit slowly, say, 'Sitting, sitting, sitting' . You must be fully aware of every movement of sitting. Just after you have sat, there may be some movements of your hands and legs. Say the appropriate words while you are concentrating on every movement. After that, concentrate on rising and falling.

If you want to sleep, say 'wanting to sleep' . When you are lying down on your bed, concentrate on every movement of your body, say, 'lying, lying, lying' .

When your head or body touches the pillow or bed, say, 'touching, touching' . Just after you have lain on your bed, there may be some movements of your hands and legs. While concentrating on every movement, say something appropriate. After that, concentrate on rising and falling.

While you are lying on the bed, you must be fully aware of every movement of your body; all feelings and all bodily reactions that give rise to feelings; all kinds of thoughts appear. When you have nothing in particular to be aware of, then concentrate on rising and falling. When you want to sleep, say, 'wanting to sleep, wanting to sleep' . When your eyelids become heavy, say 'becoming heavy, becoming heavy'. If your *Samadhi* is good, sleepiness may go and you may become fully awake. Then concentrate on your becoming fully awake, say 'becoming awake, becoming awake' . After that, concentrate on rising and falling. However sleepy you may be, you must not stop concentrating. It must be carried on at any cost, till you finally fall asleep.

Total Awareness

It is not possible to concentrate when you are asleep. However, as soon as you are awake, you must be aware of it and say 'becoming awake' . In the beginning, it will be difficult to be aware of it, so try to be aware of something as soon as you can. If you are thinking, you must be aware of it and say, ' thinking, thinking '. After that, concentrate on rising and falling. If you hear a certain sound, say 'hearing, hearing'.

Then concentrate on rising and falling. You must be aware of all the movements, such as turning, bending, stretching, and call out each movement appropriately. If you think of the time, say, ' Thinking '. If you want to get up from bed, say, ' wanting to get up '. Be fully aware of all the movements that lead to your getting up from bed. As you slowly get up from bed, say, 'getting up, getting up' . While concentrating on every movement of your body, say, 'sitting, sitting' as soon as you have sat up. After that concentrate on rising and falling.

When you wash your face, when you take a bath, when you answer the call of nature, you must be fully aware of everything — whatever you look at, whatever you see, whatever you hear, whatever you think, whatever you touch, whatever you pick up, whatever you do, even cleaning and washing in the toilet must be done with total awareness. When you are washing your hands, you must be aware of the movements of the hands. You must be aware of the cold, if the water is cold. You must be aware of the heat, if the water is hot. After washing your hands, when you tidy your dress, you must be fully aware of every movement. When you come out of the bathroom, concentrate on every step, as before.

When you are eating, if you see something, say ' seeing,seeing, seeing '. When you smash or cut or roll your food, say, 'smashing' or ' cutting ' or 'rolling' . When you bring food to your mouth, say, 'bringing, bringing, bringing' . If you bend your head, say ' bending '. If the food touches the mouth, say,

' opening '. When the food is put into the mouth, say ' putting '. When you close your mouth, say 'closing' . When you drop your hands, say, 'dropping, dropping' . If it touches the plate, say 'touching' . When you raise your head, say 'raising, raising' . While chewing your food, say, 'chewing, chewing' . If you get the taste of the food, say, 'tasting, tasting' . When you swallow, say 'swallowing, swallowing' . If the food touches the throat, say 'touching, touching' . In this manner, try your best to be aware of everything while you are taking your food.

In the beginning, your mind may not find it possible to be aware of everything. Do not be disappointed if you cannot concentrate properly. After you have built up *Samadhi,* it will be easy to concentrate on many more things than those that have been mentioned here.

Higher Form Of Concentration

After a few days, you will think that concentration on rising and falling has become very easy. You may feel that, in addition to these two, you can put in one more object to concentrate on. At that stage, you have built up *Samadhi* to a certain extent.

You may concentrate on your sitting posture besides rising and falling. Then concentrate on rising, falling and sitting. You must say, 'rising, falling, sitting' . Just as you are fully aware of rising and falling, while you are saying, 'rising, falling' you must be fully aware of sitting, while you are saying 'sitting' .

While you are lying on your bed, concentration should be transferred from sitting to lying. In this

posture, you must say 'rising, falling, lying' . You must be fully aware of lying just as you are fully aware of rising and falling.

When your *Samadhi* becomes stronger, you may feel like adding one more object for concentration. Then you must concentrate on that part of your body which touches the bed, besides rising, falling and lying. In this case, you must say, 'rising, falling, lying, touching' . You must be fully aware of all of these four — rising, falling, lying and touching. If you are sitting on a chair, say, 'sitting' instead of lying.

If it suits you better, while sitting, you may say, ' rising, sitting, falling, sitting ', and while lying, you may say 'rising, lying, falling, lying' .

While concentrating on one of the above sets of four, if you happen to see ordinary objects such as chairs, beds, tables and so on in the room, you need not be aware of these ordinary objects.

While concentrating on one of these sets, the sight of such ordinary objects cannot lead your mind astray along some distracting train of thought. However, if you intentionally look at some objects, even if they are ordinary, you must be aware of seeing them and say 'seeing', or 'looking'.

Be Detached

If you see a special sight, such as a woman or a man, even if you do not look at it intentionally, you

must say 'seeing, seeing' , many times, before you come back to your normal concentration.

In the case of sound, the above rules apply too. Pay no attention to ordinary sounds. Go on with your concentration. However, if you happen to do so, say ' listening, listening ' several times, before you come back to your concentration. When you hear distinct sounds, such as singing, barking of dogs, crowing of cocks, chirping of birds, you must say 'hearing, hearing' several times, before you come back to your concentration.

If you are not aware of the fact that you are seeing or hearing, and as a result of this un-awareness, if you do not say 'seeing' or 'hearing' , the sight or sound may lead your mind astray into a distracting train of thought. Such thoughts may give rise to greed, anger, lust etc. If, because of this unawareness, you are thinking or planning or having a feeling of lust, say some appropriate words, as soon as you become aware of any of them, before you come back to your normal concentration. If you do not cut off your train of thought, being aware of it, it is quite possible that you may find it difficult to concentrate.

Sometimes, it may happen like this: You will suddenly stand up, forgetting to make note of your desire to stand up. You suddenly pick up an object from the floor, forgetting to make note of your desire to pick it up. You lie down suddenly on your bed, forgetting to make note of your bodily movements.

You remember, only after you have sat, or picked up the object, or lain on the bed, that you had forgotten to make note of your desire to sit; to make note of your desire to pick up, to make note of your bodily movements. As soon as you are aware that you have forgotten to make note of any of these, say 'forgetting, forgetting' .

Maintain Awareness

In the beginning, before you acquire *Samadhi,* you may find this kind of concentration in accordance with *Satipatthana*-meditation (way of mindfulness) uninteresting and dull. You must be fully aware of this and say 'uninteresting, uninteresting' and 'feeling dull, feeling dull' . Sometimes, you may doubt if this kind of concentration can lead to the annihilation of all mental defilements. Be aware of these doubts and say 'doubting, doubting' . Sometimes you expect that soon your *Samadhi* will become good. Be fully aware of it and say 'expecting' . Sometimes you may recall in the afternoon what you experienced in the morning. You may recall in the evening, what you experienced in the afternoon. Be aware of it and say 'recalling, recalling' . If you are trying to analyse these past experiences, you must be fully aware of it and say ' analysing, analysing '. You may feel disappointed if your awareness is poor. Be aware of it and say 'feeling disappointed, feeling disappointed' . You become happy, when awareness becomes better. Be aware of it and say 'feeling happy, feeling happy' . In this way, you must be fully aware of whatever mental state you have.

You must be fully and constantly aware of everything from the time you become awake, till the time you finally fall asleep at night. You must never lapse into unawareness, even for a moment.

In the beginning, you may sometimes feel sleepy. You will be required to make great effort to keep yourself awake, every now and then. However, when your *Samadhi* becomes stronger, you will not feel sleepy. You will be cheerfully alert.

Special Note For Meditators

When sight or sound or taste or touch or thought comes into contact with your eyes or ears or nose or tongue or body or mind, you must be aware of the contact at once. However, never concentrate on sight, etc. As soon as one of these objects comes into contact with the appropriate sense organ, you must divert your attention from the object to the fact of seeing, etc. Outside objects must be shut off from your consciousness, as far as possible, by means of constant awareness. You have been asked to say for instance, 'seeing, seeing', when you see something. When you are saying ' seeing, seeing ', you must concentrate on the fact of seeing and not on the object of the sight. You must do likewise in the case of other objects. Your mind must stand still on your body and mind. You must not allow it to be distracted by any outside object.

If you faithfully, earnestly and diligently follow the instructions, you will go up one stage of insight after another, until you finally reach your goal.

Vipassana Insights

As a result of meditation, the meditator will aquire *Vipassana* insights that will lead him to *maggas* and *phalas* — the correct Path to experience the real fruition of spiritual achievement. It is not possible to give in this treatise a detailed account of the experiences which a meditator will generally encounter when he acquires each *Vipassana* insight. In the following paragraphs, *Vipassana* insights will be dealt with superficially. It is hoped that the meditator will have a fair idea of these insights.

Vipassana meditation is meant to enable the meditator to acquire these insights. Therefore if the meditator does not realise these insights, either the method of meditation or the meditator is at fault.

The meditator should be forewarned that his experiences need not necessarily be on all the four methods of concentration (the set of four mentioned earlier). Some may be similar and some may be different. Since it is impossible to mention each and every experience, the meditator should not be disappointed if he does not find some of his experiences in the descriptions that follow. Whatever his experiences may be, he must tell everything to the instructor. The experienced instructor will know at once whether the meditator's experiences are in conformity with the teachings of the Buddha.

First Insight

(Namarupa — pariccheda — nana)
(Knowledge arising from analysis of mind and body)

If a meditator practises *Vipassana,* in accordance with the instructions given in the preceding chapter, he will get *Samadhi* — concentration — in due course. When the *Samadhi* becomes sufficiently strong, he will be aware of the rising and the mind that is aware of the rising, the falling and the mind that is aware of the falling, the sitting and the mind that is aware of the sitting, the bending and the mind that is aware of the bending, the stretching and the mind that is aware of the stretching, the raising of the feet and the mind that is aware of the raising, the stepping and the mind that is aware of the stepping, the lowering and the mind that is aware of the lowering and so on. The experiences are attached to each other like pairs.

When the awareness is strong, the meditator will realise that the rising is one entity and the awareness is a different entity, that the falling is one entity and the awareness is a different entity and so on. In this way, he will have a very clear realisation of the existence of two different entities of mind and body. Soon it will become clear in his awareness that the mind is flying towards objects, such as rising, falling, sitting, standing, bending, stretching and so on. When this fact becomes clear in his awareness, the meditator is said to have perceived the true nature of the mind, i.e., the mind always runs or moves towards objects.

When the existence of the two entities becomes very clear in his awareness, if the meditator is well versed with the teachings of the Buddha, he may get this kind of realisation:—

' There are only two entities — rising and awareness; falling and awareness; sitting and awareness; bending and awareness and so on. There is nothing besides these two; a human being is nothing but these two. A man is nothing but these two. A woman is nothing but these two. Besides these two, there is no such thing as *' soul '* or *' I '* or *' atta '*. He gets this kind of realisation during his awareness of objects, such as rising, falling, sitting, stretching and so on.

The meditator generally has the above mentioned experiences when he achieves the first insight.

Second Insight

(Paccaya pariggaha — nana)

(Knowledge concerning the nature of desire for requisites)

When *Samadhi* grows stronger, the meditator is aware as soon as he has a desire to move any part of his body. In the beginning of the *Vipassana* he is not fully aware of the desire as soon as it appears. Even though he is saying 'desiring', he generally says so only after the desire has disappeared and that part of the body has already moved as a result of the desire. However, when the *Samadhi* grows stronger, as soon as the desire to bend his arm appears, he is fully aware of it. Therefore he can say, ' desiring to bend '

simultaneously with the appearance of the desire to bend. In the case of other movements also, desire to move and awareness of it take place simultaneously. The awareness of movements takes place only after the awareness of the desire has taken place.

In the beginning of the *Vipassana,* since generally he misses the desire and says 'desiring, desiring' only after it has already started, he thinks that the body moves quicker than the mind. When the *Samadhi* grows stronger, he feels as if his awareness even precedes the desire and seizes it as soon as it appears, just as a stork, sitting by the side of a stream, picks up a fish as soon as it jumps out of the water. At that stage, he begins to see very clearly that mind moves faster than body. Since he is fully aware of every desire and every appropriate movement that follows desire, he realises that desire is the cause and appropriate movement of the body is the effect.

While he is concentrating, he clearly perceives that his awareness is jumping from rising to sitting, from sitting to falling, from falling to touching, from touching to rising and so on. And when he suddenly sees a picture on the wall, his awareness leaves for the picture. While he is saying 'seeing, seeing' as a verbal confirmation of his awareness, he hears the barking of a dog. Then his awareness leaves the picture and flies to the sound. While he is saying 'hearing, hearing' , he suddenly becomes aware of a desire to scratch an itch on his thigh. After he has said 'desiring, desiring' , he is aware of every movement of his hand, stretching to scratch the itch. He says 'stretching,

stretching' . At that moment, a thought object of his favourite food appears. So he says 'appearing, appearing' . All of a sudden he is aware of saliva flowing on his tongue. While he is saying 'flowing, flowing' , the thought object of food reappears. He says 'reappearing, reappearing' and after a few moments, he becomes annoyed because the thought of his favourite food refuses to go. Therefore he will be saying either 'being annoyed, being annoyed' or ' refusing to go, refusing to go '.

From such experiences he realises —

a) that there is awareness because there is object;

b) or that object is the cause and awareness is the effect;

c) or that there will be no awareness when there is no object;

d) or that there will be no effect when there is no cause.

Out of this clear perception, he gets a spontaneous realisation that *kamma,* or in other words, what a being decides or says or does, is the cause of an endless chain of the past, present and future rebirths and also all the good and bad things of life that follow every rebirth.

The meditator must not allow this realisation to occur again and again. After once or twice, he should be aware of its recurrence by saying 'recurring, recurring' until it disappears. Then the meditator must concentrate on one of the objects.

The meditator generally has the above mentioned experiences when he achieves the second insight.

Third Insight

(Sammassana — nana)

(Determining of all phenomena of existence as impermanent, miserable and impersonal.)

When *Samadhi* grows stronger, many meditators experience a good deal of unpleasant feelings, such as itches, burning sensation, pains, aches, heaviness, strange feelings as if they are tightly bound with ropes or put into a very narrow hole. However, when they stop their *Vipassana* these unpleasant feelings disappear. And when they carry on their *Vipassana,* these unpleasant feelings re-appear. The meditators need not worry about them. When they reach this stage of the *Vipassana* such unpleasant feelings generally appear. If they concentrate on them and say 'itching, itching' or 'paining, paining' or some other appropriate words as a confirmation of awareness these unpleasant feelings will gradually disappear.

In addition to these unpleasant feelings, the meditator may feel as if he is seeing strange sights, such as the Buddha and his disciples moving in the sky, some person whom he loves and reveres, forests, mountains, gardens, picturesque clouds, decomposed corpses, human skeletons, disintegration of animate beings and inanimate objects, condemned beings in hell, *Devas,* and so on. He may also feel as if he is seeing himself bleeding or cut into pieces, or becoming decomposed.

He may also feel as if he is actually seeing his bones, flesh, sinews, entrails and so on. These are only figments of his imagination. At this stage of *Vipassana,* his *Samadhi* is so advanced that as soon as he imagines something, these figments suddenly appear.

Whenever these appear, the meditator will be aware of them and say 'seeing, seeing' . However if the meditator is interested in these strange sights or if he is overcome with fear after seeing such sights, they will not disappear soon. Otherwise, after saying 'seeing, seeing' once or twice, they should disappear.

At this stage, the meditator should take great care that imagination does not distract his concentration.

Some meditators do not have such experiences, and they will become bored after concentrating for a long time on their regular objects of rising, sitting, falling, touching. Then they must be aware of this fact and say 'being bored, being bored' until boredom disappears.

When the meditator reaches this stage of *Vipassana,* his concentration has considerably improved. Therefore whenever he is aware of an object, he is clearly aware of its beginning, middle and end. In the past he left the old object, whenever there was a new object. He was not clearly aware of the disappearance of the old object. But now it is different. He leaves the old object for the new object, only after he is clearly aware of the disappearance of the old object.

a) When his concentration is particularly good, as he very clearly perceives the sudden appearance and disappearance of objects, he gets a spontaneous realisation that all objects come and go, that they are not permanent.

b) In addition to this, he will also realise that impermanence can never be a source of bliss, it can cause only misery. He comes to know that beings are attached to life because they are ignorant of its unreal and impermanent nature.

c) He will also realise that no one can change this impermanence into permanence since impermanence takes place in accordance with the laws of Nature.

The first, second and third realisations indicate respectively the *Anicca* (Impermanent), *Dukkha* (Unsatisfactory) and *Anatta* (Soulless) nature of mind and matter.

From the known, the meditator jumps to the unknown and realises that these three characteristics are inherent in all mind and all matter without exception.

When the meditator has such realisations, he must not allow them to recur more than once or twice. And he must concentrate on his rising, sitting, falling, touching.

The meditator generally has the above mentioned experiences when he achieves the third insight.

Fourth Insight
(Udayabbaya - nana)
(Knowledge arising from the contemplation of rising and falling)

While he is concentrating on the above objects, his awareness improves. Before he reaches this stage, while he was inhaling, he was aware only of rising of the abdomen. Now because of his improved awareness, he becomes aware of several stages of rising. In the past, while he was exhaling, he was aware of only one falling of the abdomen. Now he becomes aware of several stages of falling. In the case of other bodily movements also, such as bending, stretching, sitting, standing, lying, etc., he becomes aware of many more stages of movements.

Throughout his body also, he becomes aware in quick succession, of all the itching sensations which he was not aware of before. Some meditators become aware, in quick succession, of extremely slight itching and pain throughout their body.

At this stage, *Samadhi* is in a very fine state. Whenever there is an object, it seems as if awareness is rushing straight into it. Sometimes it appears as the object itself which is directly falling on the awareness. The meditator's awareness is not vague. He can vividly distinguish one object from the other. Because of this powerful *Samadhi,* if only he follows the objects as each appears, he can be aware of all the objects as they come and go, although the speed with which they come and go is incredibly swift.

Because of this improved *Samadhi,* the meditator will suddenly feel as if the atmosphere around him becomes illuminated. In whichever direction he may look, he feels as if he sees some pleasant lights.

Because of his steadfast awareness, he may get *Piti* — rapture. It is a kind of ecstasy, which a meditator usually gets when his *Samadhi* becomes strong. Because of this ecstasy, pleasant tremors pass through different parts of his body. This ecstasy may cause tears to roll down the eyes. The meditator may feel as if he is riding a merry-go-round. Many religious books record these experiences which have been had by their saints. Actually there is nothing supernatural about them and there are no divine powers involved. According to the Buddha, all human beings who achieve certain levels of spirituality can experience them.

Here the meditator must be given a note of warning. The strange but pleasant lights he sees around him, the feelings of heightened joy he has, the wonderful experiences that he receives as a result of his surprisingly steadfast awareness, may influence the mind and lead him astray from the *Vipassana.* There are many cases of meditators, who have become victims of this disturbance. Some wept bitterly when they found that the light, the feelings of joy and the wonderful experiences, in which they had taken keen delight, had disappeared together with *Samadhi,* because of this mental attitude.

Therefore when the meditator sees the lights or when he has feelings of joy or when he is attracted by the wonderful experiences, he must be aware that these

are dangerous conspirators. He must not allow himself to hanker after them. As usual, he must say 'seeing, seeing' or 'exulting, exulting' or 'wondering, wondering' or some other appropriate words, till these influences disappear. In the beginning, the meditator might find it difficult to combat these influences, since he himself is very fond of them. But with perseverence and knowledge of the evil consequences, he will triumph over them.

Fifth Insight
(Bhanga nana)

(Knowledge arising from contemplation of the dissolution of all forms of existence)

When *Samadhi* grows stronger, the meditator clearly sees only the end of the object, without seeing clearly the beginning. When the meditator sees in this way, he thinks that objects are disappearing faster than before. In fact objects are not disappearing faster than before, but because of his better *Samadhi,* he sees more. The explanation is as follows:

In the past, while he was concentrating on the rising of the abdomen, he was aware of the rising only. But now, while he is concentrating on the rising, he is aware not only of the disappearance of the rising, but also of the disappearance of the mind that is aware of the disappearance of the rising. He clearly perceives the disappearance of both the rising and the mind that is aware, the latter following the former in quick succession. Also in the case of other objects, such as

falling, sitting, standing, bending, stretching, aching, itching, scratching and so on, he perceives clearly the disappearance of the objects as well as the mind that is aware.

Some times at this stage awkward incidents can take place. For instance, as soon as there is a desire to bend his hand, the meditator is aware of this desire. And since the mental stimulus is broken up by the awareness, the meditator finds himself unable to bend his hand for a moment. Also in other movements, he finds similar experiences. This is a good sign. It shows that his *Samadhi* is improving. When the meditator reaches such a stage, he should give up his usual objects of meditation. He should concentrate on the objects, as each appears on the sense organs. Only when he becomes tired, or when some powerful distractions disturb his awareness, should he revert to his usual objects. And as soon as he regains his steadfast awareness he should abandon his normal objects and concentrate on objects as each appears on his sense organs.

The meditator generally has the above mentioned experience when he achieves the fifth insight.

Sixth Insight
(Bhaya-nana)

(Knowledge arising from the awareness of Terror or Dreadful feeling born out of Knowledge)

After he has constantly seen, in quick succession, the disappearance of objects and the minds that are aware of such disappearances, he has a spontaneous

realisation that in the past mind and matter would have been impermanent, as they are at present and that they will be impermanent in the future also. The meditator must be aware of this realisation and say 'realising, realising' until it disappears.

Moreover, in between the awareness of objects, the meditator becomes aware of a certain feeling of dread in him. It is not like the feeling of dread he usually has when he encounters a dreadful animal or apparition or object. It is a feeling of dread born out of deep knowledge of the impermanence of mind and matter. He must be aware of it and say ' dreadful, dreadful ' whenever it appears.

The meditator generally has the above mentioned experience when he achieves the sixth insight.

Seventh Insight

(Adinava-nana)

(Knowledge arising from the Contemplation of Misery)

The previous stage, this stage and the following stage are one and the same. One differs from the other only in degree.

When the meditator reaches this stage, he becomes aware of the impermanence of both the object and the mind that is aware of the object, more clearly than in the previous stage. Therefore his abhorence of mind

and matter grows. Now and then, he will blame impermanent mind and matter as bad, useless, dangerous; he may blame rebirths as being the source which produces suffering, such as old age, disease, death, worry, extreme misery due to separation from dear ones and so on; he may blame illusions that hide reality from being seen; he may blame all attempts to cling to life that is impermanent and so on. Every time he blames, he will be aware of it and say 'blaming, blaming'

At this stage, he will feel as if his whole body is very rapidly disintegrating. Some meditators feel as if their bodies are becoming very rapidly decomposed and rotten.

The meditator generally has the above mentioned experiences when he achieves the seventh insight.

Eighth Insight

(Nibbida-nana)
(Knowledge arising from Contemplation of Aversion)

The *Vipassana* requires every meditator to be aware of objects, as each appears on the sense organs. Objects are nothing but matter and mind. Therefore, when the meditator reaches this stage of *Vipassana,* because of his abhorrence of mind and matter, his enthusiasm for *Vipassana* wanes. He feels like giving up *Vipassana* in order to get rid of the awareness of mind and matter, which he abhors. However, he feels himself unable to

give it up. Because of his strong *Samadhi, Vipassana* appears to become automatic. Without much effort on his part, he is aware of every object that appears on his sense organs. At this stage, he is very much like a man in the story who has to pass through a certain road, which is fully covered with dirt and mud. He loathes to set his feet on the road. However, since he has very urgent business to attend to at the end of the road, he has to go on in spite of his disgust. Therefore even though he hates to be aware of mind and matter, he has to carry out the *Vipassana,* since the road towards the complete annihilation of mind and matter lies through the *Vipassana.*

Before *Vipassana,* or even in the beginning of it, when the meditator thought of affluent and powerful persons, *Devas* and *Brahmas,* he felt very much attracted to them. However, when he reaches this stage of *Vipassana,* the thought of them fills him with abhorrence, since he sees only reality, that is the rapid disintegration, without seeing illusions, such as forms, radiance, charm, beauty, etc.

The meditator generally has the above mentioned experiences when he achieves the eighth insight.

Ninth Insight

(Muncitukamyata-nana)

(Knowledge arising from the Desire for Deliverance)

When the meditator reaches this stage, because of his strong abhorrence of mind and matter, he clearly feels as if a strong impulse is driving him away from

the awareness of mind and matter. He begins to feel that it will be ideal if there are no objects, no sense organs and no mind since they are the cause of suffering; that it will be ideal if he can escape from these causes of suffering; that it will be ideal if he can reach that place where such causes are totally absent.

The meditator generally has the above mentioned experiences when he achieves the ninth insight.

Tenth Insight

(Patisankha-nana)

(Knowledge arising from Reflective Contemplation)

Some meditators think that it will be better to suspend their practice of *Vipassana,* since they are aware only of the most depressing and unpleasant things. If the meditator has such thoughts, he should say 'thinking, thinking' till these disappear. However, some meditators find it difficult to get rid of these thoughts. So they run away from the centre. But to their amazement, they find that they cannot get rid of *Vipassana.* Even at home, they are aware of every object that falls on any of their sense organs.

When a meditator reaches this stage, an experienced instructor knows it well. The experienced instructor knows that due to the meditator's abhorrence of mind and matter, his enthusiasm for *Vipassana* is waning. Therefore the instructor, during his daily contacts with the meditator, always emphasizes on the importance of being aware of *Anicca, Dukkha* and *Anatta,* since

only through this awareness, can he obtain freedom and sainthood. Acting on this advice, the meditator works harder.

However, some meditators do not need prompting from the instructor. By themselves, they get realisations to this effect.

At this stage of meditation, some meditators may experience unbearable pain. They should not worry about it. Concentrate on it and say ' paining, paining ' until it disappears.

The meditator generally has the above mentioned experiences when he achieves the tenth insight.

Eleventh Insight

(Sankharupekkha-nana)

(Knowledge of Equanimity with regard to the Formation of Existence)

This is the most important stage in the *Vipassana* meditation. It is only two stages away from freedom and sainthood. These two remaining stages, in fact, are not hurdles. As soon as the meditator reaches the peak of this stage, the two stages automatically let him go straight to sainthood. However, when a meditator is close to the peak of this stage, he may falter again and again because of the wrong steps he has taken. Before discussing something about this insight, it will be useful to mention the wrong steps which make a meditator falter when he is nearing the peak.

When the meditator steps into this insight from the preceding insight, his *Samadhi* or mental concentration and awareness of objects develop. It will not be an exaggeration if it is said that no objects, however insignificant they may be, will escape his awareness, as soon as they come into contact with any of his sense organs. From this very good point, the meditator will steadily go up to the peak.

If we say for example, that the peak of this insight is 90 degrees from the bottom, the meditator will have a very pleasantly strange experience, when he has climbed to about 85 degrees. At this point his awareness becomes much more accelerated. It makes him think something unusual is going to happen. It makes him expect that he is going to get sainthood. Thinking that he is going to get sainthood soon, he feels delighted. In order to gain sainthood as speedily as possible, he makes special efforts at concentration.

Thoughts, expectations, delights, making special efforts and many other such things are enemies of awareness. Because of these, the awareness becomes weak and as a result, the meditator slips many times from 85 degrees to lower degrees. Among the meditators who slip in this way, there are many who had advance knowledge of experiences, mentioned in this treatise. At this stage of *Vipassana,* extremely steadfast awareness is essential. The meditator must not, under any circumstances, allow thoughts, expectations, delights and such things to distract him. The meditator must neither make a special effort nor relax. He must carry on as usual.

When the meditator reaches this stage, his awareness becomes clearer. He feels that he is aware of even the very insignificant objects without effort. Sometimes, objects may occur in very rapid succession. In spite of the rapid succession with which each object comes to contact with different sense organs, from head to toe, his awareness is quite able to cope with the emergency.

His awareness is mostly followed by realisations of either the *Anicca* or *Dukkha* or *Anatta* nature of mind and matter.

Even in the initial stage of his insight, the *Samadhi* or mental concentration of the meditator is very advanced. That is why he is aware of even the very insignificant objects without effort. At this stage, when the *Samadhi* is advanced and not yet perfect, it will be very helpful if he can, instead of concentrating on his usual objects, concentrate on objects as each falls on any one of his sense organs. He will not be able to do so when his *Samadhi* is firm in due course. During this stage, the mind has the tendency to rest on a particular object for a long time. Therefore, while it can flit about with ease, the meditator should take fullest advantage and concentrate on all objects as each falls on any one of the sense organs. It will be very helpful in pushing him towards sainthood more speedily.

When his *Samadhi* becomes stronger, he sometimes feels as if he is being lifted into the air. Sometimes, he feels as if his whole body is being gently touched

with delicate pieces of cotton or velvet. Sometimes, very few objects appear and he is very calmly aware of them as each appears. Sometimes all the objects disappear together with his body from his awareness. And the meditator is aware of only his mental process — one mind after another coming into being and disappearing.

When the meditator reaches this stage, he is quite close to sainthood. Therefore, he should carry on with diligence. When his awareness becomes accelerated, he must be very alert because it is quite essential to keep himself strictly to the path of awareness. It is a sign that he is approaching sainthood. Therefore, under no circumstances should he allow the distractions such as expectations, joys, worries, etc., to damage his *Samadhi.* These are in fact the great enemies of *Samadhi.*

The meditator generally has the above mentioned experiences when he achieves the eleventh insight.

Twelfth Insight
(Anuloma-nana)

(Conformity - Knowledge, is identical with Adaptation to Truth - Knowledge)

As soon as the preceding insight reaches its peak, this twelfth insight transforms the mind to become qualified to rest on *Nibbana.* The mind that concentrates at this stage is known as *Anuloma.* It is the last *Vipassana* insight.

Thirteenth Insight

(Gotrabhu-nana)

(Maturity Knowledge, entering into the lineage of the Noble Ones)

This insight is known as *Gotrabhu.* This insight also maintains clear concentration like the preceding insight, namely *Anuloma.* For the first time throughout *Samsara* (infinite rebirths), *Gotrabhu* mind leaves the six objects, on which the mind used to rest, and rests on an entirely different object, which is neither mind nor matter. Buddhism calls it *Nibbana,* which means extinction of suffering and extinction of rebirths.

The duration of *Anuloma* or *Gotrabhu* insight is extremely short, since each insight comprises only one concentration.

This insight is not a *Vipassana* insight. While the meditator is having *Vipassana* insights, his mind rests on mind and matter. *Gotrabhu* rests on *Nibbana.* This is the difference between *Vipassana* insights and the rest, namely *Gotrabhu, Magga* and *Phala* insights.

Fourteenth and Fifteenth Insights

(Magga and Phala nana)

(Knowledge of what is the correct path for *Nibbana* and the Realization of the Fruition)

The mind that immediately follows *Gotrabhu* is called *Magga.* It also rests on *Nibbana.*

The first *magga* uproots two *anusayas* — inclination, namely *ditthanusaya* the seed, that produces inclination to speculation (false views) and *vicikicchanusaya* — the seed that produces inclination to wavering (doubts about the *Buddha, Dhamma* and *Sangha*).

The second *magga* weakens the five remaining *anusayas.*

The third *magga* uproots two out of the remaining five *anusayas,* namely *Kamaraganusaya* — the seed that produces attachment to five senses: sight, sound, smell, taste, touch. *Patighananusaya* — the seed that produces anger.

The fourth and final *magga* uproots the three remaining *anusayas,* namely *mananusaya, bhavaraganusaya, avijjanusaya.* The first means the seed that produces pride. The second means the seed that produces attachment for superior existence. The third means the seed that produces ignorance of truth.

Phala means the fruit of the consequence of *magga.* Some meditators, who have a fair accumulation of *paramis* (perfections — experienced in previous existences) gain two stages of *phala*-minds, which follow *magga.* Some meditators, with a solid accumulation of *paramis* experience three *phalas,* which follow *magga.*

Phala minds also rest on *Nibbana.*

Sixteenth Insight
(Paccavekkhana nana)

(Recollected mental image obtained in concentration or inner experience on Fruition of the Truth)

There is one more insight. It is called *Paccavekkhana nana.* This insight recalls one's experience of *magga, phala* and *Nibbana.*

This insight also does not last long. Because of this insight, the meditators are able to relate their experiences to the instructor as follows:—

a) ' Objects and awareness suddenly disappeared, as if they were cut off '.
b) ' Just as a twig was cut off from the tree, objects and awareness were suddenly cut off '.
c) ' Just as a very heavy load was pushed off our heads, we felt suddenly relieved of objects and awareness '.
d) ' Just as something has dropped from our hands, we felt objects and awareness have suddenly dropped '.
e) ' We were suddenly released from objects and awareness, as if we were released from hindrances'.
f) ' Just as a tiny flame expires, objects and awareness expire all of a sudden'.
g) ' We were suddenly pushed away from objects and awareness, as if we were pushed from darkness into light'.

h) ' We jumped out of objects and awareness, as if we jumped out of the rubbish heap to the clear ground '.

i) ' Objects and awareness sank, as if a heavy stone sank into water '.

j) ' Objects and awareness stopped, just like a running man who stopped suddenly when he was pushed from the front '.

The duration of the total disappearance of objects and awareness is not a long one. It is as long as the duration of three consecutive minds — one *magga* mind and two *Phala* minds. However, since it is a phenomenal occurence, it makes a very strong impact on the meditators. So after recalling their experience, some exclaim, ' It is an extraordinary experience '. Some guess that it must be a *magga* and *phala.* Some people who have some knowledge of Buddhism know that total cessation of objects and awareness means *Nibbana.* They also know that they were aware of the total cessation of object and awareness, because they have got to *Magga* and *Phala,* the highest stage in their mental development.

MODERN APPROACH TO MEDITATION

By Professor Lily de Silva

Studies done by investigators such as Walter B. Cannon show beyond doubt that there is a definite correlation between physiology and strong emotions. ' When a sensory trunk is strongly excited the adrenal glands are reflexly stimulated and they pour into the blood stream an increased amount of adrenalin '. This gives rise to the overt manifestation of bodily changes such as dilation of the pupils, sweating, rapid respiration etc. There are other physiological changes such as those in heart beat, blood pressure, blood volume, electro-dermal responses etc. But they are not quite useful for us as they cannot be related to material found in the Pali Canon. The logical inference is that if strong negative emotions can give rise to certain physiological changes in the body which may be described as un-healthy, the cultivation of positive emotions too should give rise to physiological changes which are quite different from those stimulated by negative emotions.

As opposed to the dilation of pupils and a consequent look of ferocity in the instance of a strong emotion such as anger, we find in the Pali texts mention

made of the monks' eyes as being very pleasant. The monks, it is said, look at one another with amiable eyes and they mix with one another as milk and water blend. This feature was conspicuous enough as to draw the attention of the intelligent public, for, King Pasenadi of Kosala is reported to have cited the pleasing expressions in the eyes of the monks as one of the special characteristics which gave him a good impression of them that they possess purity of heart and spiritual maturity.

The complexion or the facial expression of the monks too is mentioned as an impressive characteristic feature indicating the height of spirituality attained. The bright clear complexion or the serene facial expression has attracted the attention of many observers and has been the instigator for conversion of non-believers, for instance *Sariputta* was impressed by the bright countenance and the serene appearance of the monk *Assaji* and that was the starting point of his conversion. King Asoka's conversion to Buddhism was prompted by the outward appearance of the novice *Nigrodha*. Most of all the spotlessly pure bright complexion of the Buddha was counted as one of the 32 marks of a Great Man and these marks are considered the outward manifestations of profound spiritual maturity.

Physiological Characteristics

Corresponding to sweating being one of the physiological manifestations of emotional excitement there is an interesting incident from the life of the Buddha

relevant for our present study. Once Saccaka came for a debate with the Buddha. He was reputed to be a redoubtable debator. He boasted that he would harass the Buddha in debate as a strong man would shake a goat to and fro catching hold of him by his long beard. Arrogantly he bragged that he could see no man who would not break out in a sweat when challenged by him in debate. But when the debate with the Buddha was actually held in the presence of a company of 500 Licchavis it was Saccaka who was found sweating profusely in defeat. On this occasion it is said that the Buddha bared his chest and showed that he did not sweat at all. This episode may be taken as evidence to maintain that an *arahant* does not perspire due to emotional excitement.

Rapid respiration is another physiological characteristic of negative emotions. Changes in breathing rhythm or amplitude are considered excellent indicators of deception. It is a commonplace experience that respiration remains calm and placid when we are quiet and resting. It becomes even calmer still in meditation. The Pali Canon maintains that respiration ceases altogether during the fourth *jhana* which is a highly refined subtle state of superconsciousness. It is possible that metabolism comes to a standstill or a minimum level during this state. Though *arahants* are not always abiding in this *jhana* it is possible to surmise that they must be constantly maintaining a calm regular rhythm in their respiration. They never get emotionally disturbed or excited. Their calm is so profound that

it is said that they also maintain an inner silence even when they speak as the sub-vocal chatter which is characteristic of all human beings has been quelled altogether in their case.

The Physiology Of Meditation

Modern scientific studies on the physiology of meditation shed light also on some other aspects relevant to the present study. It has been found that the concentration of blood-lactate level declines precipitously in meditation. Its concentration normally falls in a subject at rest but the rate of decline during meditation has proved to be more than three times faster than the normal rate. It offers a good contrast to the rise of blood-lactate levels when patients with anxiety-neurosis are placed under stress. It is also reported from experiments that the infusion of lactate brings about attacks of anxiety in such patients. Furthermore, it is significant that patients with hypertension (essential and renal) show higher blood-lactate levels in a resting state than patients without hypertension, whereas in contrast, the low lactate level in meditators is associated with low blood pressure. Thus it is clear that the fall in the blood-lactate level has a beneficial psychophysiological effect. All this medical evidence goes to show that a healthy calm mind has its expression in a positively transformed body chemistry. Therefore it is reasonable to maintain that the saint who has reached the culmination of meditative practice and realized *nibbana* is healthy in both mind and body.

Types Of Mental Waves

The body has certain electrical properties that are clearly associated with psychological processes such as attention and emotion. One of these is shown in the rapid rise in the electrical resistance of the skin accompanying meditation. Wallace and Benson report that 15 subjects tested showed a rise of about 140,000 ohms in 20 minutes. In sleep, skin resistance normally rises, but not so much or at such a rate. The same test is used in lie detection, and most laboratory studies have found that the skin resistance response is the best indicator of deception. This evidence shows beyond doubt that involuntary physiological changes accompany emotional states both positive and negative. Again it is said that the brain is constantly emitting small electrical potentials measured in cycles per second called Hertz (Hz). These waves of varying frequencies and shapes are labelled with Greek letters such as delta waves (less than 4 Hz), theta waves (4-7 Hz), alpha waves (8-13 Hz) and beta waves (greater than 14 Hz). Electro encephalographic recordings of subjects under meditation have disclosed a marked intensification of alpha waves.

Analysis Of Mental Waves

Wallace and Benson report that they recorded the waves from seven main areas of the brain on magnetic tape and analysed the patterns with a computer. They say that typically there was an increase in intensity of slow alpha waves at eight or nine cycles per second in the frontal and central regions of the brain during meditation. In several subjects this change was also

accompanied by prominent theta waves in the frontal area. On the other hand, emotional disturbance such as anger is always accompanied by alpha blocking whereas sleep, ' the antithesis of emotion ' is characterised by slow high-amplitude activity. Light and sound stimuli also block the alpha rhythm. It is reduced or suppressed during periods of apprehension. Alpha waves are absent in records of patients in an anxiety state. On the strength of these findings it is possible to conjecture that the harmony of the mind determines to a very large extent the health of the body. When related to the experience of *nibbana* it seems reasonable to conjecture that an *arahant* has put an end to all psychosomatic diseases. His body would be susceptible only to physical ailments and injury caused by external agents.

Case Studies From The Pali Canon

There are reports in the Pali Canon of *arahants* falling ill and experiencing acute pain. It is also noteworthy that they are said to have recovered by meditating on the *dhamma*. On the strength of the evidence furnished so far one is inclined to regard their illnesses as being caused by physiological factors. There is also an incident of a monk who is not an *arahant* dying of snakebite. Buddha says that if the monk had practised *metta* fully he would not have met with such an unfortunate death. It may be that the snake would not have bitten him in the first place had *metta* been fully cultivated. On the other hand, there is another commentarial episode where a non-*arahant* monk was bitten by a poisonous snake while he was listening to the *dhamma*. The poison started spreading in the body

and the pain became acute. The monk then reflected on the immaculate purity of his virtues from the time he received higher ordination. It is said that, as a result of this reflection, great joy arose in his mind suffusing his entire body which acted as an antivenom and he was cured.

Meditation is described in psychophysiological terminology as a ' wakeful hypometabolic ' state characterised by: ' reductions in oxygen consumption carbondioxide elimination and the rate and volume of respiration; a slight increase in the acidity of arterial blood; a marked decrease in the blood-lactate level; a slowing of the heartbeat; a considerable increase in skin resistance; and an electro-encephalogram pattern of intensification of slow alpha waves with occasional theta-wave activity'. It may be surmised that the metabolism during normal waking hours is probably maintained at the lowest possible healthy level in the case of the *arahant,* as his body is not subject to undue wear and tear brought about by emotional excitement. The positive refined sublime emotions or the divine modes of conduct (*brahmavihara*) such as *metta, karuna, mudita* and *upekkha,* not to speak of the higher cognitive states, must necessary find expression in body chemistry to produce a healthy constitution and a calm, unruffled, serene personality filled with peace, contentment and the joy of enlightenment (*sambodhisukha*).

Spiritual Development

We are reminded here of a statement made by the Buddha once. He said that even if there is a portion

as much as a pinch of dust that defies change in the psychophysical personality of the human being, leading the higher life (*brahmacariya*) would be useless. What is meant is that there is no such permanent part and the higher life can successfully bring about a total transformation of the individual in both mind and body. Modern scientific studies on the physiology of meditation prove that basic biochemical and bioelectrical changes do take place in the body as a result of mental culture. It is therefore possible to surmise that the culmination of mental culture can result in a total psychophysiological transformation.

Judging by studies done on the bio-feedback technique it is possible to conjecture that a radical transformation of the nervous system must be taking place with the development of higher mental potentialities. It is common knowledge that the autonomous nervous system is divided into two parts as the sympathetic nervous system and the parasympathetic nervous system. Johann Stoyva in an article on Biofeedback Techniques states that probably in states of deep relaxation there is a shift in the autonomous nervous system towards parasympathetic dominance. Parasympathetic functioning is associated with subtler emotions — wonder, religious and aesthetic experiences, contemplation — emotions characterised by a broader range of awareness. On the other hand, sympathetic predominance is linked to emotions in which the range of awareness is restricted — anger and fear, for example. On the strength of this evidence it may be conjectured that parasympathetic functioning

develops to greater efficiency with spiritual advancement.

Very little is known about the functions of the pineal gland which Rene Descartes is said to have regarded as the chosen residence of the human soul. It is described as the built-in biological clock of the human being as the regularity of sleeping and waking depends on that. This gland synthesises a hormone called melatonin which affects behaviour, sleep, brain activity and sexual activity such as puberty, ovulation and sexual maturation.

While melatonin stimulates brain activity, it inhibits sexual activity. Again it has been recognised that light/dark, olfaction, cold, stress and other neural inputs affect the pineal function. Exposure to light reduces the synthesis of melatonin and depresses pineal weight. On the other hand, light accelerates sexual maturation and activity.

When compared with Buddhist ideology the function of the pineal gland seems to be the physiological expression corresponding to the psychology of sense control. Buddhism maintains that unrestrained sense stimuli disturb mental activity. If the sense doors are well guarded, i.e. if visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory and tactile inputs are controlled, a corresponding degree of happiness and concentrated mental activity become possible. *Cittassa ekaggata* or the ability to fix the mind on one point is greatly determined by the control of sense faculties. In terms

of physiology it seems to mean that such sense control helps the synthesis of melatonin in the pineal gland which stimulates brain activity and retards sexual activity. Thus in terms of pineal function, brain activity and sexual activity seem to be antithetical. Buddhism, too, emphasizes that sexual desire prevents clear thinking, distorts vision, clouds issues, inhibits wisdom and destroys peace of mind.

The Way To Enlightenment

The entire scheme of spiritual development comprising the Noble Eightfold Path is an efficient methodical plan of action designed to bring about a gradual psychophysiological transformation in man culminating in the attainment of *nibbana*. Cultivation of moral habits, *sila,* is the frame for wholesome behaviour by means of which healthy body chemistry gets gradually established. Neural circuits related to harmonious physical and vocal activity get strengthened and those related to violence become weak proportionately. The second phase in the development of the Noble Eightfold Path comprises meditation. A steady rapid psychophysiological development takes place during this phase. It is our conjecture that the adrenalin secretion which accompanied negative emotions of rage and fear gets reduced to a healthy workable level. Perhaps it is added in small quantities to the blood stream to maintain an unflagging enthusiasm to continue in the difficult practice of meditation with undaunted courage and perseverance. Or it may be, as the endocrine glands stimulate or inhibit one another a balanced combination of these glandular secretions

affects the cognitive and emotional behaviour of the meditator. when sublime modes of conduct such as *metta, karupa, mudita* and *upekkha* are practised over and over again they must be getting ingrained in the nervous system perhaps increasing parasympathetic dominance. With the practice of *vipassana* or insight-meditation the pineal gland seems to develop full bodily potential for unlocking all possible spiritual knowledges in the meditator's mind and when the process is complete *nibbana* is attained.

The interpretation finds further support in the Buddhist conception of the reciprocal relationship between *vinnana* and *namarupa.* This relationship is illustrated in the Canon with the simile of two bundles of reeds placed together supporting each other. A change of position in one is bound to have a corresponding change in the other. Thus psychological development affects physiological function, apparently through the activity of the nervous system and the endocrine glands. Healthy physiological changes reinforce healthy psychological activity. Thus the process of mutual psychophysiological interaction works for the happiness or misery of the individual depending on the moral quality of the actions performed through body, speech and mind. As the mind is involved in all activity it is the mind that is responsible for the quality of body chemistry and neural function.

When the mind ultimately attains to a state of absolute purity beyond corruptibility, body chemistry and neural function undergo radical transformation

which will not be reversed again. It can be conjectured that when the pineal gland and its auxiliaries develop to the fullest possible capacity, the hitherto inactive brain regions unlock their secrets and reveal them when attention is directed accordingly. Thus memory becomes so efficient as to revive prenatal knowledge running into numerous previous existences. Similarly the divine eye or clairvoyance gets clarified disclosing the *kammic* antecedence of human experience. When one gains direct vision and firsthand knowledge of the bodily and mental processes involved in the human personality one attains supreme Enlightenment.

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